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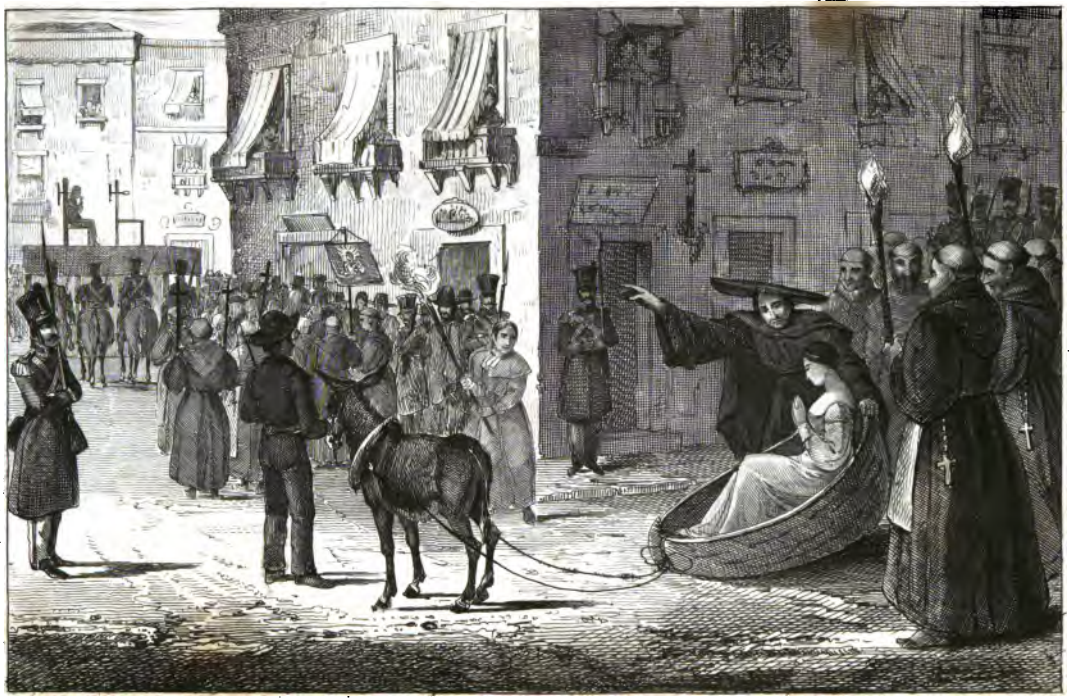

J. Cawse, del.ᵗ

R.W. Smart, fec.

THE GARROTE.

MANUELLA,

THE EXECUTIONER'S DAUGHTER.

A STORY OF MADRID.

"At Madrid, and in every part of Spain, it would be safer to rob and murder on the highway than to take from an image of the Virgin Mary a pin, a bracelet, or a top-knot."—LANGLE'S SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON-STREET.

1837.

altars stood in the recesses of the walls. A group of three individuals were pacing the aisles, each bearing a lighted taper. Their attention was at length drawn to a small altar-piece, richly decorated with the gaudy emblems of catholic worship.

The three friars were intently examining, and taking notes of, the various relics displayed before them. One held a catalogue, and, approaching the taper, began to read the contents aloud :—

"A gold bracelet of the blessed Señora de Atocha ; value sixty piastres.

"A shoe-buckle of the Reverend Father in God San Cristofolo ; forty piastres.

"A necklace of our Lady of Carmen, brilliants mounted in gold ; eight hundred piastres.

"A diamond pin from the dress of our Señora del Pilar ; two hundred piastres.

"Total, eleven hundred piastres, contribution for the Carlist battalion of Guipuscoa."

"Little enough! Fra Bernardo, we must strip the immaculate Virgen de las Angustias in the corner there; her sensibility will surely weep pearl-drops for the holy cause of Don Carlos de Borbon."

"God forbid!" said the monk, who appeared the Cicerone of the temple; "that blessed image is worth an annuity of fifty thousand dollars to the convent. The little brooch in the centre of her sash, mounted in pearls, contains a thorn plucked from the temples of our Redeemer, and dyed with his precious blood. Not for the salvation of King Carlos will our order part with that valuable relic."

"Take you the relic, brother, in God's name, but leave us the casket."

"Impossible! Geronimo Merino! not a pearl of it must be removed. As soon as the gates of the chapel are opened, our habitual devotees flock to kiss the sacred treasure. Don Rodrigo

—friend Merino—bear with me; any boon but this!"

"Well, well!" said Rodrigo, "but make up the value. Are those rubies which I see on the petticoat of that little Magdalen?"

The fray so addressed gathered himself to his full height. "Is this temple so meanly endowed, brother Rodrigo, that you would suspect any trash defiled our holy images?"

"Not for a moment! Off with them for the love and welfare of Don Carlos de Borbon!"

But Merino had anticipated the order, and the flounce of Magdalen's petticoat was already in his safe keeping.

"What are the baubles worth?" asked the Cura.

"Eight hundred piastres!"

"Psha! Brother Rodrigo, write four; the other four hundred is little enough to allow for our friend's conscience."

The bell for matins now rang, and the brothers

of the order were seen entering from different doors leading into the church, whilst the gates were thrown open.

"Let us retire!" said the Cura, "our collection shall be resumed after vespers."

"I will take an inventory in advance," observed Rodrigo, "whilst I recite my matins. Retire, Merino, and beware of the Christinos: not even the saints will preserve thee if thou art known to be in Madrid."

The early votaries of the convent were dropping in one by one, it being chiefly women who attended at that hour. Many of high rank and noble blood, whom the vicissitudes of life had reduced to penury, but who still clung to their religious duties, would seek the early twilight for public worship, thus eluding the gaze of the proud and contumelious, as they exercised the indispensable duties of catholic religion; and hence the admirer of female beauty at Madrid is induced to rise betimes, aware that

many a bashful face and lovely form, which he may never encounter in the fashionable display of the Prado or the fantastic windings of the Retiro, will requite his searching eyes at that unostentatious hour of divine worship.

The morning service had begun; and Rodrigo, following mechanically the outward routine of catholic prayer, repeatedly crossed his forehead and breast, whilst his eyes were scanning the valuable ornaments that surrounded the images and relics, and his moving lips (which others might conjecture to pronounce an inward prayer) ran over the mental calculation of the value he fixed upon that saintly property which he was condemning for the resources of Zumalacarregui's recruits.

A lad approached the small chapel near which Rodrigo was musing, and bent his knee before the image of the Virgen de las Angustias. Inward and deep devotion manifestly filled his youthful breast, and fervently he prayed. The

commonly worn capa concealed the suppliant's form; dark and flowing curls shaded his cheek; humility bowed his head; not a lineament of his face was revealed to the calculating Jesuit. The morning prayer being ended, the youth rose from the kneeling-board, and stepped forward to salute the sacred relic embossed in the sash of the image. It was an ordinary act of the devout who visited the chapel; but there was excitement and earnestness of zeal in the manner of the young man. Rodrigo, whose eye was fixed on the valuable brooch, secretly coveting the relic for contribution, was witness to the fervour with which it had been pressed by the lips of the young devotee, and with a sudden curiosity his eyes followed the movements of the youth, who, as he turned to depart, revealed to the Jesuit the features of the page of the Marquesa de Olivares. Suddenly he drew the folds of his hood close around his face, and thus the youth passed on without recognising him.

Rodrigo remained musing for some time, his eyes wandering alternately from the relic on the breast of the image to the portico through which the page had passed, as if that relic and its enthusiastic worshipper formed links of a chain of thought in his speculating and intriguing mind.

The frequenters of the chapel had diminished in number, and the last few were dwindling away, their forms moving on between his glance and the invisible object of his mind's pursuit without breaking the charm of his abstraction. A slim female figure now entered the temple, stealing along the darkest aisle of the building. She appeared as if anxious to avoid observers; but Rodrigo's eye was upon her, and his wandering thoughts were instantly recalled.

"Alice!" said the Jesuit, laying his hand upon her arm, "well met; thou wast seeking me? Speak! my bidding—is it done?"

"Herbert De Clifford——"

"First tell me of the hangman's daughter; is she mine?"

"Not yet, nor——"

"Be courteous, kind, obliging, Alice; it were wise in thee to prophesy favourably."

"List, Rodrigo!"

"To hope! Sweet Alice, thou darest not say otherwise!"

"To counsel—prudence—Señor!"

"Now, what prates thy wisdom?"

"Should villany,—deep-plotting, execrable means—a course forbidden by heaven—secure to thee possession of the person of the hangman's child, ere thou contaminate her purity seek out me!"

"What if I do?"

"That will I then reveal for which thy soul shall thank me."

"Thou speakest parables! Woman, methinks if thy conversion to the holy church has

turned thy heart, it has had something to do with thy brain also."

"Rodrigo, I know thee well! With such resolves as thine, despite human law and heaven's eternal curse, the hangman's daughter *may* fall into thy power; but ere thy touch profane her,—if not for thy soul's sake, at least for that of thy worldly comfort,—I implore thee seek me out; for by that sainted image I swear—"

"The oath is not binding!"

"By this hand that murdered the innocent one——"

"Hum! that *is* something to swear by! But to what does all this tend? Methinks I have it!"

"Ha! what dost thou think?"

"That once upon a time that wrinkled phiz, those hollow eyes of thine, that meagre form, dressed up with youth and beauty, may have

subdued the amorous headman's heart. What sayest thou? Out with it! — she is thy offspring!"

Alice appeared to revive, but made no reply.

"Well, well, it is so! and thou wouldst have a settlement before——hey? 'tis just: let us hear the demand!"

"Not for the wealth upon that sacred altar!"

"Come, come! I begin to understand thee! 'tis the musty adage, 'honour amongst——' Thou wilt not be our go-between. Alice, I respect thy motherly scruples, and will seek another agent more conformable to my wishes. Now for De Clifford?"

"I have denounced him to the hidalgo!"

"The treasonable correspondence?"

"Is secreted where thou badest me."

"Was the insinuation believed? is Herbert forbidden the house?"

"Hitherto not; the accusation was abortive:

but when the papers are discovered, the second proof will be strengthened by the first imputation."

"The hidalgo's house will be searched to-day; intimations of his treason are lodged with the corregidor. Insinuate to the family that 'tis De Clifford who must have concealed the criminal documents."

"All shall be done."

"And, mark me! Wealth is in store for thee, if, through thy machinations, Merced de Valmarino will listen to Montreil. The arrest of the hidalgo will facilitate the means. Addios!" added the Jesuit, as he bent his steps to leave the temple.

Alice was some time in recovering presence of mind. One subject held unrivalled dominion, and everything connected with Manuella possessed a master influence over her senses and actions. The deep policy which guided her cool deliberations on any other topic, upon this

point forsook her. Anxiety and fear unnerved her for intrigue, and she remained a being of impulse. Thus, dreading the villain whose powers of doing evil she had learnt to appreciate, she no longer measured her own means of opposition, but eyed only that fearful abyss which his threats displayed to her imagination in all its magnitude.

Alice Downie's visit to the convent had not been for the purpose of encountering Rodrigo; and now, calling to mind the immediate object of her presence there, she proceeded to the sacristy, and inquired for Fra Joachino. Through a loop-hole in the apartment, the voice of one, who could view the applicant for admission without being himself discerned, gave orders for her entrance, and Alice followed a guide to an adjoining cell.

"Alice!" said the soldier-cura Merino, "I expected thee."

"Geronimo! you remember, in the war of twenty-three, that royal Ferdinand, at your petition, promoted a certain youth; his name, methinks——"

"Ay, surely!" interrupted the Cura. "Alice, he was a fine lad; 'tis no secret; Pepita Serra bore him to *me!*"

"Heaven!"

"Where is the wonder, woman? Demonio! I was a sprightly fellow then. Poor Pepita Serra!—the bivouac-life killed her."

"'Twas said——"

"A lie! 'Tis true I despatched my brother, the contrabandista: the fool stood in my light. T'other poor puny mortal fretted away for a few lashes on his back. 'Twas said I killed my mother: 'tis false! she died in her bed, of a broken heart 'twas reported. But the devil himself is not so black as he is painted. I loved the boy's mother for all that, and the boy,

too, till he swore allegiance to Isabel. 'Alice! hast thou taken note of my behest? this" (prefixing an oath to the name) "this De Clifford, where does he resort at night?"

"The shell for murdered bodies at the gate of the Carcel de Corte——"

"What has the shell to do with the Englishman's carcase, unless it be within it?"

"The shell for murdered bodies——"

"Out, woman! answer me! Hast thou learnt De Clifford's nightly resort?"

"The house of Valmarino!"

"The hour?——"

"Seven at night."

"Does he go prepared for the encounter I plan for him?"

"Merino, beware the cool determination of an Englishman."

"Well! now then let the *murder* out. Whoe'er it was, his soul should thank me, he felt no

agony; 'twas a master stroke; the blade entered to the saw of the steel. Who was it?"

"The shell contains the body of Lorenzo, the son of Pepita Serra — thine own flesh and blood!"

CHAPTER II.

" Vo solcando un mar crudele
Senza vele, e senza sarte;
Freme l'onda, il ciel s'imbruna,
Cresce il vento, e manca l'arte;
E il voler della fortuna
Son costretto a seguitar
Infelice, in questo stato
Son da tutti abbandonato:
Meco solo e l'innocenza
Che mi porta a naufragar."

METASTASIO.

A mysterious Envoy — Sacred Relics not always Safeguards—Sacrilege discovered.

" A PACQUET for Señor Don Manuelito," sai a servant, accosting the page of the Marques de Olivares, and presenting it.

"The bearer?"

"Disappeared on delivering it."

Unaccustomed to receive despatches, the youth mused for a moment in conjecture of his correspondent. At length, having torn the envelop, a kind of stupefaction seized his faculties on beholding the precious brooch of the immaculate "Virgen de las Angustias." His frame shook with awe and reverence as he gazed on the sacred relic. Perceiving some writing upon the cover, he, with trembling hand, deposited the hallowed gem, and read—

"Child in God, the father Bernardo greets thee. Solace awaits thee in the bosom of the church. The relic of the faithful will preserve thee till thou seekest him at vespers at the convent."

Bewildered with joy, subdued by devotion, the innocent Manuella (no longer concealed from the reader as the page of the Marquesa de Olivares,) again and again read with rapture

the inspiring passage. Ever religious, ever confiding, she doubted not the sincerity of Fra Bernardo. The crime of one professor of religion shook not her faith in the rectitude of another—individual delinquency affected not the sacredness of her creed. She remembered the brutal violence of Rodrigo only to dismiss *him* for ever from the pale of Catholic purity; and she clung with the more fervour to her cherished faith in proportion as its professed supporters deserted it.

The Catholic religion opens to its votaries an inexhaustible fund of consolation. To the artless and confiding its sources of comfort are numberless. Never-ending duties, penances, and multiplied offices, furnish abundant employment to the ignorant or idly-disposed; and to the wealthy, varied and satisfactory feelings, that soothe privileged opulence in those vicissitudes and afflictions from which the most favoured of mortals are not exempt.

Manuella, who had elected father Bernardo

as confessor, felt a sensation of pure rapture at this encouraging mark of his esteem. The young and generous heart, sanguine in its hopes, clothes the intentions of friends with its own munificence. Her holy adviser had shewn her especial indulgence; had dignified her self-respect with his parental approbation; and Manuella, self-approved in her conduct, felt that ennobling and all-sufficing energy within which supplies a fortitude unknown to the irregular and irreverent mind.

The vesper hour, as we have seen, was appointed for Manuella's visit to Bernardo; and, when the combined alarum of all the bells in the metropolis proclaimed the time of angelus, she left the mansion of the Marquesa, and took her way to the convent.

At this hour, a Jesuit was seen in close consultation with one of the friars of that temple, near the altar-piece of "Our Lady de las Angustias."

"By the beads of my chaplet, Don Rodrigo,

we cannot part with the brooch—it is the bread of our community."

"Brother, I dismiss the request. But let me observe—the valuable stone is too much exposed."

"How mean you?"

"'Tis a great temptation to the needy and profane."

"Little versed art thou, father Rodrigo, in Castilian scruples. Moreover, sacrilege obtains no mercy. Ignominious death awaits the plunderer. We fear no purloiners of holy wealth."

"Beware!" said Rodrigo, grasping Bernardo's arm, as he beheld the page of the Marquesa de Olivares kneel before the chapel of the Virgen de las Angustias. "The brooch—is gone!"

Bernardo's face turned pale.

"Even now, methinks," added the Jesuit, whispering in his ear,——"See you that boy? Even now, in the twilight, as I marked him

kiss the relic, I saw him pluck at it. I have eyes, father Bernardo,—I am not deceived."

Bernardo, followed by two of the order, approached the hallowed image.

"Gone!" ejaculated the worthy friar, and his companions laid hold of the unsuspecting youth, who, without resistance, was led to the sacristy.

Rodrigo observed the group, until the ponderous door of the vestibule closed upon them, and then left the temple, leaving the holy fathers to recover the purloined treasure by their own sagacity. Gentle and unoffending was the supposed culprit, cheerful and obedient to the guidance of the monks.

"A crime so heinous in one so young! Boy! where is the stolen brooch of the image of the blessed Virgen de las Angustias?"

That virtuous mind, which, in the lore of life, has read the page of iniquity, and learnt to appreciate its own distance from crime, if peradventure challenged by atrocious and perjured

accusation, might be steeled to the attack in the consciousness of self-rectitude. But the artless and ingenuous soul, whose simplicity robes all human nature in its own peaceful harmony, — whose knowledge of error and sin has hitherto only been purchased by the limited experience of youth, receiving with reluctance convictions of the existence of *guilt*, will naturally recoil from a charge of villany so atrocious, overwhelmed, and dismayed. Was it to be wondered at, in one formed like Manuella, that surprise and indignation should overmaster her faculties, and that, speechless and stupified, neither her thought should prompt, nor her tongue articulate, a single syllable? At length, however, the bewildered girl hysterically repeated the friar's word—

"Stolen?"

An alguazil, followed by attendants, now entered the vestibule, officiously and promptly sent by some friend to order and security. As the

page offered no explanation, but stood silent and confounded, the men of office proceeded to examine Manuella's person. Starting back, she made an effort to free herself from their grasp, but it was unavailing, and she fell exhausted at their feet. Tearing her garments asunder, the alguazil drew back in astonishment.

"A female in disguise!" he exclaimed.

"It was a premeditated scheme, in order to escape detection," said Fra Bernardo; "the brooch must be on her person."

The alguazil meanwhile proceeded to search for the jewel, whilst the monks who hovered around stood in watchful earnestness over the delinquent's form. Upon her breast the adored relic was found; but even the rude hand of the officer, from a motive of commiseration, reluctantly withdrew it.

"Ave Maria! what precocious profligacy; a terrible example," added the monk, "must be

made of the criminal. Bear her off, Señor Alguazil, to the Carcel."

Manuella was not wholly insensible to the passing event, but circumstances had paralyzed her presence of mind. The first flash of indignation which had deprived her of the power of utterance, was afterwards succeeded by a feeling of contempt at the sacrilegious charge. But the discovery of the brooch, which she had neither thought nor physical power to restore, made her conscious of the startling effect of appearances against her.

Meanwhile, a rumour had spread abroad that the brooch of Nuestra Señora de las Angustias had been purloined, and a crowd gathered at the portico of the temple. It was with some difficulty that the alguazils made their way through it with their charge; whilst a burst of execration saluted the ears of the hangman's daughter.

"Death to the violator of the Church!"

"The horca is too good for the thief—an auto-da-fé!"

And not till the wretched girl was secured within the dungeons of the Carcel did the fearful imprecations cease to salute her ear.

CHAPTER III.

" It is a wise child that knows its own father."

" Te collocò, la provida
Sventura in fra gli oppressi:
Muori compianta e placida;
Scendi a dormir con essi;
Alle incolpate ceneri
Nessuno insulterà.
Muori; e la faccia esanime
Si ricomponga in pace;
Com 'era allor che improvida
D'un avvenir fallace,
Lievi pensièr verginei
Solo pingea ....."

A. MANZONI.

Nocturnal Rendezvous—Mysterious Intimations—Funeral Procession—A Caution.

On that site of Madrid, known by the name of the " Punto de Diamante," a noble avenue, bordered by majestic trees, extends along the banks of the Manzanares. On one side, upon a proud

and abrupt eminence, rises the royal residence of the sovereigns of Castile and Arragon. The road ascending to the palace winds diagonally upwards, right and left, from the base of the rock, and, in its zig-zag course, forms, by numerous windings, those striking angles which have procured for it the name of "Punto de Diamante" (*diamond cut*).

Independently of this access to the edifice and the city, a causeway for pedestrians, running, in a direct line, from the river to the summit of the ascent, considerably curtails the distance. This is thickly planted with lilac trees; and, as a property of the crown, receives such care and cultivation as to render it one of the favourite walks of the Madrileños, who, in the spring season, give a judicious preference to the "Paseo de las Lilas."

The evening was at its close. The few remaining visitors of the Paseo were seen to bend their steps, from its sequestered and lonely site,

to the more guarded lounges of the city; and, before night closed in, no loiterers remained within the gloomy shadow of the alley of Lilas. The danger of the times, in fact, rendered this spot insecure, although in the immediate vicinity of the corps-de-garde of the palace—by reason of its being without the boundaries of the city.

One solitary individual now entered the promenade. A degree of hesitation was observable in his pace,—circumspection marked his progress; whilst one hand, thrust in his bosom, cautiously held a small pistol. Pausing at every step, he seemed to await the presence of a companion.

"Herbert de Clifford!" at length pronounced a female voice.

"Himself!"—and, at the word, a woman emerged from a thicket of the plantation.

"Who art thou?—Thy purpose, ere I suffer thee to approach!"

"The Sibyl of the Santa Catalina ball,—here to perform my promise!"

"Enough!—my origin, it appears, is known to thee; and, by thy accent, I should judge thee to be my countrywoman—who *art* thou?"

"Seek not to know;—meanwhile, thy friend!"

"Strange being! Before I thank thee, prove thyself that friend."

"Be candid *thou*, and answer me.—Who was thy mother?"

"One who gave me birth, but not a parent's care—she left me to the stranger. Shame rests, they say, upon her after-life. Her name was Alice . . . ."

"Thy father's name?"

"De Clifford!—Slain at the sortie of Bayonne. My mother then forsook me."

"Hold!—thou art misinformed, Herbert! Thy mother died,—thy father lives!"

"Thou triflest with my feelings. Ill suits the marvellous with simple truth. I pray thee, be consistent."

"Herbert, be guided by your own judgment —to that alone will I appeal. A secret interest moves me in your behalf;—else, ask yourself to what speculation of selfishness or intrigue one unprotected—friendless, as you are, could urge me? Our actions are all interest: nay, the generous love (as we are wont to say) of those who ask but its return is selfish still. Ingratitude, sir, is often a misplaced term for affection ill requited."

"Then, if *thou* art my friend, *I* am not thy debtor."

"Yes; but, I mean to say, not to my generosity. Hear further, and be convinced. Thy mother's name belonged to one of beauty and high descent, till, from her father's house, she was driven, and her fall achieved by a betrayer. Her home abandoned in secrecy and sorrow,

the hour of life to thee was one of death to her. Hard by the spot where she concealed her shame, there lived a female who, like her, had risked heart and honour, having listened to a soldier's vows. His name was that you wear. He loved her well, and vowed, ere he departed, that if she bore a child to him, a permanent provision should be made for both. Your birth suggested that she might gain possession of the infant, and call it De Clifford's offspring. Harpy-like, she watched the moment of thy mother's death, and stole thee away,—thou knowest the sequel."

"My heart is harrowed! — Could I believe....."

"Hear me on, and judge of my sincerity. Thou didst a service to my bosom's friend;—it was but lately. Thou rememberest the adventure of the cemetery—the pursuit of the wild bull. I will requite it."

"Ha! tell me—'twas a fearful hour. The

ruffians overpowered me — I was stunned by their blows. I dread to hear;—but tell me, if thou canst, that she escaped—is well! Misfortune has not left me one pang of memory more keen than that adventure."

"Know, then, that she was saved uninjured."

"Thou *art* my friend for that good news. I love thee for it. There was something in the peril of that hour—such purity in that angelic form—my soul was armed in its defence."

The distant sound of voices, chaunting in plaintive harmony, now arrested their attention. Individuals had approached the avenue on the banks of the Manzanares—and now, in that direction whence the voices came, was perceived a number of lights, waving with the wind. As the group drew near, the melancholy notes of a funeral anthem swelled on the evening breeze.

The hour—the loneliness around—contributed to inspire awe, and fix attention; and Herbert and his companion ceased speaking. As the

lights approached, the female drew her mantilla closely over her features, and they remained impervious to the gaze of De Clifford.

The procession of death advanced. A boy, in the dress of a chorister, preceded, bearing a tall black crucifix. Then followed the open coffin of the deceased, supported by young girls dressed in white. A priest and another individual closed the rear. All but one joined in the solemn anthem; and, when the dirge subsided, the young girls, who supported the bier, intonated a hymn in the vulgar tongue :—

" Weep not for her who has won
Of Heaven the fadeless bloom;
We bear to her home the chosen one
O'er the threshold of the tomb.

" There are flowers misplaced on earth—
They droop in their virgin pride;
An angel proclaims their worth—
A God reclaims his bride.

" Weep not" &c.

On they passed. By the torch-light were revealed the features of the deceased. A beautiful girl seemed merely to repose upon the bier. Life was in the radiance of her cheek; while the chaplet of orange flowers round her head—the blossoms scattered about her person—and a silver garland thrown over her bosom—appeared rather like the festal adornments of nuptial rites than the emblems which should shroud the dead.

"Juanita de Valmarino!" exclaimed Herbert, as the procession passed him, and he shrank back impressed with awe. Not till the lights were concealed from him by the surrounding trees, as the procession turned off to pass the bridge of Swogia, on its way to the cemetery of San Isidro, was his attention recalled to his companion.

"Time is on the wing," she observed;—"where do you visit to-night, De Clifford?"

"The afflicted—the mourners of the dead—the family of Valmarino!"

"Mark me, the hour grows late, and I must hence. I would advise thee not to visit there to-night."

"Friendship and compassion strengthen inclination. Wilt thou guide me thither?"

"Thou knowest that in Spain revenge is bought,—the assassin's steel is a marketable commodity."

"Explain yourself!"

"Wear upon your person means of defence."

"Behold them—they were brought in distrust of you."

"Yet am I here to ward the blow. A hired assassin awaits De Clifford on the hidalgo's threshold. I know that an impulse of the heart will lead thee there spite of my warning. Think not, by changing thy accustomed way, to escape—the murderer follows thee!"

"I will take heed."

"Farewell—I have more to say. Follow me not. Trust to me: *I* will seek *thee* out!"—and Alice disappeared in the thicket of the "Paseo de las Lilas."

CHAPTER IV.

" Das Kind greift nach den bunten Karten,
Ein Haus zu bauen, fällt ihm ein.
Es baut, und kann es kaum erwarten,
Bis dieses Haus wird fertig seyn.
Nun steht der Bau, o welche Freude!
Doch ach! Ein ungefährer Stoss
Erschüttert plötzlich das Gebäude,
Und alle Bänder reissen los."

Various Intrigues of Alice Downie — An unlooked-for Encounter.

When Alice Downie left the Paseo de las Lilas, she bent her steps towards the gate of Segovia, busied with a multitude of uneasy thoughts and conflicting schemes. The present state of her affairs presented a combination of intricacies so knotted together, that even her practised dex-

terity could not unravel them. She thought of Rodrigo, and his premeditated seduction of her adopted one; of Montreil, and his scheme for possessing the no less beautiful, but better protected Merced; of De Clifford, and Merino's unerring knife. In the nefarious plans of all (save the design against Herbert's life) she was herself deeply involved. Hitherto she had been a tool of the villany of others—the mercenary and unconcerned instrument of their crimes. Now, her own interests were in jeopardy; her own Manuella was the being for whose ruin her long habits of manœuvring had been put in requisition,—and whilst, at least, one virtuous purpose prompted her actions, (the safety of Manuella,) her practical powers of dissimulation and intrigue were resorted to in self-defence. It might be argued, that a motive so noble as the preservation of virgin innocence, if publicly avowed, would meet ready support and protection from the benevolent, and prove likewise the

guerdon of her own safety. But an open and bold proceeding assimilated not with the secret machinations of her past life, which, if known, would not only defeat her purpose, but involve her in disgrace, and probably destruction. The greatest evil which, to the mind of Alice, could befal her, was the loss of Manuella; and she imagined that, if she could avert the impending danger, and gain time, fortune would befriend her in after measures for the protection of her beloved one. Besides, Alice entertained other favourite schemes which compelled her to silence. In the course of her adventurous life, she had hoarded up the earnings of ill-doing; and the secret store was destined for a project which had of late wholly absorbed her contemplations.

She thought of quitting Madrid, and taking with her, to a point far from the ignominy which was attached to her extraction, the beautiful daughter of the hangman. She speculated on settling in a foreign land; where, they being

unknown, society would receive her and her adopted one; and deemed that, finally, Manuella being enriched with a dowry of no mean amount, the hand of some approved companion might dignify and render happy the life of the lovely girl. It was at this stage of speculation that the events of Rodrigo's attempt on Manuella, and Herbert's subsequent manly defence of her life and purity, had suggested a new train of projects; whilst a confession of the innocent girl herself prompted a scheme which, having Manuella's welfare for an object, smoothed at once the path to its accomplishment, though, with any other aim in view, it would have presented insurmountable obstacles to the mind of Alice. On the one hand, Rodrigo's criminal perseverance in his projects to possess himself of Manuella's person, roused her to a keen sense of the danger of protracted residence in the capital; whilst, on the other, she felt that an imperious motive alone would induce the executioner's daughter to leave

the dwelling of her parent. The confiding girl, who avowed to Alice on all occasions her inmost thought, had confessed, with a virgin blush, that she entertained something more than gratitude towards the defender of her innocence in the cemetery; and Alice, speculating on the bait which might entice her away from her country and home, seized this avowal of her maiden preference whereon to plan her future operations.

It was to such an end she had sought De Clifford, in order to warn him of his danger. She had witnessed the growing attachment between Herbert and Merced, and abetted the machinations of Rodrigo to undermine De Clifford's reputation, with the twofold object of pecuniary reward, and of removing the hidalgo's daughter, as the dangerous rival of Manuella. It was to this end that, perceiving the strong predilection of the family of Valmarino for De Clifford, spite of every insinuation against him, she seconded the base designs of the Jesuit to destroy the

worthy hidalgo, and put in action that diabolical plan which, it was anticipated, would cast irremediable infamy upon Herbert—would effect the incarceration of Don Ruy—and fill the hearts of the females of that family with abhorrence against the supposed betrayer for ever:—whilst, unprotected and dismayed, Merced would fall an easy sacrifice to the voluptuary Montreil. Thus did Alice's busy brain devise, concoct, and calculate the chances. Her reckless spirit of intrigue, divested of all scruples of conscience, saw only the end in view, regardless of the means she might employ for its attainment. Herbert de Clifford, whose origin was known to her, was the object of still deeper calculation. She had but partly revealed to him her information; the sequel she still prudently reserved. Meanwhile, she felt satisfied that the disgrace which would be entailed upon him, in a manner sufficient to baffle every attempt on his part to obtain redress, would drive him out of

the pale of Spanish society as the unprincipled betrayer of confiding friends; and that the politic Montreil, to cover more effectually his own villany, would join in the public outcry against him; so that, friendless and poor, welcome would be the home and affections of the beautiful daughter of the public executioner of Madrid. Then, and then only, with becoming prudence, would she confide to him his unknown lineage, —then would she reveal to him the affluence which awaited the recovered offspring of an ill-fated and departed mother, whose own desolate parents had lavished their gold to discover the stolen child of an only beloved, and lamented daughter.

But the fabric of her imagination—these air-built castles, whose visionary substance is proverbial in Spain—might, although supported by the ceaseless labours of Alice, crumble to the ground,—she might herself fall into the snare she had so artfully spread for others.

She had now entered the city, and was proceeding to visit her *Compare,* as she facetiously named Marco Diaz, when, turning out of the Plaza Mayor, she was prevented from gaining immediate access to his dwelling by a crowd of people now hurrying on in the direction of the Carcel. Ascending some steps to avoid the pressure, she unconcernedly glanced at the object of the commotion. Exhausted, fainting at every step, a youth was dragged on by a pitiless escort of police, and now passed close to the spot where Alice stood. A piercing shriek arrested the attention of the bystanders;—the way was opened; Alice clung to the wretched prisoner; and both were borne along, attended by the execrations of an infuriated rabble. That captive was the ill-fated Manuella.

At length, the doors of the prison were closed upon the supposed culprit; the rabble dispersed after venting their opprobrious epithets on the

profane plunderer of holy mother church, and, baulked of the means of inflicting instant punishment on the offender, solaced themselves with the hope of a speedy execution on the scaffold.

CHAPTER V.

"Un enfant est né dans l'état; son père n'est pas connu : eh bien ! c'est son roi qui doit l'être, et la patrie sera sa mère."

PENSEES PHILOSOPHIQUES DE SERVAN.

La Grande Duerma—The King, the Father of his People.

THE Spaniard experiences not that violent and inordinate grief over the remains of departed friends so often observed in other countries. The certainty of eternal beatitude held out to true believers by the tenets of their religion, and the absolution of the priests, impress the

mind of the survivor with solace under such afflictions; and when a beloved one is overtaken by that sleep which they so emphatically call the "Grande Duerma," the friends who are left feel an inward satisfaction if they can affix to the dead one's breast a certificate, signed by the curate and confessor, purporting that the defunct had scrupulously fulfilled all his religious duties, and that the said attestation was procured by him when in perfect health, fully entitling him to the prayers of the church.

Thus, when youth is snatched away, when innocence and virgin beauty are borne to the tomb—far from exhibiting signs of sorrow or regret, the sepulchral preparations wear an aspect of festal adornments, and the former habitation of the now ever-silent maiden, becomes the scene of hospitality and welcome.

Not so, however, the house of Don Ruy de Valmarino. A scene of deep-felt affliction was manifested throughout the family of the departed

Juanita. Even Doña Mariquita, who seldom evinced the weakness of sensibility, was now in tears. The Marquesa de Olivares, who was there to give and receive consolation, divested of that fashionable ensemble to which she was peculiarly devoted, was truly distressed; whilst Merced, whose grief was perhaps the most poignant of all, bore that outward appearance of calmness so often produced by the extremity of sorrow.

They were all assembled in Juanita's favourite apartment, the library. Mementos of her gentle avocations were spread around. The walls bore witness to her talents, in many a pencilled form, and specimens of her embroidery decorated the chamber. Her spirit seemed to breathe around. Merced would frequently recal the lamented dead to visionary life—the sad truth, at such moments, appearing in itself a dream; till, looking around on the other mourners for the departed,

the fatal reality returned with double accuteness to her sorrowing heart.

More composed was the hidalgo himself. The loss of his favourite daughter had entered like iron into his soul, and left there a grief lasting as life. The old man still possessed, however, his usual presence of mind, and seemed to set the example of resignation to the will of Providence; he was even as cheerful as he might ever be again; and when De Clifford's inquiries were announced, he advanced to meet the young Englishman, and led him to his private cabinet. The hidalgo pointed to a chair, as he kindly pressed the hand of Herbert.

"Friend De Clifford," said the hidalgo, after a pause, during which he seemed to recal his mind from its burden of domestic affliction, whilst his companion, participating in the cause, respected that silence,—"De Clifford, I would fain speak with you, even at this moment, when

the visitation of God lies heavily upon us. Some duties should not be deferred,—and one, my young friend, respects yourself."

The hidalgo paused again, and having recovered himself, continued—

"Señor! you have been received within the circle of my acquaintance—your education and manners formed favourable precursors, and that which we deemed inseparable from your appearance was not questioned. I believed you to be of gentle and honourable descent. Caballero! I am now informed that your origin is ignoble, — but your word shall be my warranty. Are you, or are you not, of base extraction?"

"Don Ruy! my origin is unknown to me. I thought myself the illegitimate offspring of a British officer,—this very hour that fact has been denied. Señor, I never knew my parents!"

"Insinuations of this nature," resumed the hidalgo, "have been made of late, to wean me

from your acquaintance. I bestowed on them no after-thought, supposing that malice or envy had given rise to them. You have affirmed their truth."

De Clifford rose from his seat.

"Caballero," said the hidalgo, rising to meet him, "I am glad to acknowledge you my friend!"

"Trifle not, Don Ruy, with my feelings. The world has judged me ignoble by birth; my country names me bastard,—yet, Caballero, I have a heart to prize your esteem;—a sensibility as alive to contempt as that of legitimate beings—Don Ruy, farewell!"

"Do you, then, reject my friendship?"

"Señor, I reject your prejudices—your false pride!"

"Hear me, Herbert de Clifford! As you have found a welcome to my house, so your frankness has now found the way to my heart."

"You amaze me!—what mean you, Señor?"

"I will explain. You are an Englishman, and, consequently, 'tis you who are the victim of prejudice. Shame, in your pre-eminent country, falls on the helpless offspring of illegitimacy. In Spain, we are more just. The child of nature, disowned by those who gave him existence, receives a noble parentage; the king becomes his father, and, from the cradle, he ranks with noblemen. Thus, Don Herbert, we are equals. Do you still refuse my friendship?"

There are events in our lives, the memory of which is cherished to the grave;—there are moments of soul-elating joy, which throw a sunny reminiscence on after years. They reconcile us to our fellow-creatures, even under galling injustice: we forgive our race for the sake of those rare and noble specimens of excellence which, though thinly scattered upon earth, appear as shining lights, proclaiming the celestial origin of man.

De Clifford was overcome by the proceedings of the hidalgo. Although steeled to meet adversity, he was not proof against kindness; and this behaviour of the noble Castilian, as unexpected as it was magnanimous, produced conflicting emotions, which subdued him with an excess of grateful feeling even painful to support. The hidalgo interpreted his silence eloquently in his behalf; and, shaking his hand, dismissed him with an entreaty that, after a few days had been devoted by his family to private regret for the departed, he would renew his visits;—"and," added the Castilian, "Esta casa es al servizio de V. M., are not empty words or hollow professions to my friend Herbert."

When Herbert left the house, he observed a coach draw up before the hidalgo's door, surrounded by a troop of alguazils; but, in thought, now occupied with the advice he had received at the Paseo de las Lilas, he took no farther notice of the circumstance; and, addressing the

first Sereno he encountered, engaged him as an escort to his dwelling. Meanwhile, the party who had stopped at the hidalgo's porch effected an entrance, and, leaving a guard at the gate, entered the apartments, placing a sentinel, as they proceeded, at every door. It was in the hour of deepest affliction that the family were roused by the unceremonious visit of an alcayde, attended by his myrmidons. Although it was not an uncommon occurrence, at this period, to surprise many a respectable family, and, upon simple report alone, make a strict search through the dwelling for proofs of treason, yet the Carlist Don Ruy Valmarino had hitherto received no such insult; his noble and open bearing never having given rise to suspicion. Such an event was, therefore, a matter, if not of dread, at least of disgust, to the old Castilian.

"Search, gentlemen," said he, with ill-restrained indignation, "and let your investigation

be so minute that the Royal Christina may have no future cause to suspect my conduct."

"My Lord," said the official, "the report is, that your son, Don Jayme, has joined the Facciosos, and that your correspondence with him is detrimental to our lawful sovereign the Queen."

"Vaya!" said the Doña Mariquita; "reason you with these fellows?—leave them to perform their odious duty!—be it ours to look on with silent contempt."

Don Ruy was recalled from his abject state of mind by his wife's remark, and, resuming his wonted dignity, interrupted her with calm severity.

"Such rebuke is ill-timed, Madam. If the government must be obeyed, it would be mean to upbraid the passive instruments of its decrees. Gentlemen," said he, addressing the chief officer, "let my submission to your authority plead

for this ungentle reception. Proceed upon your duty."

The hidalgo enjoined the domestics not to oppose, by word or deed, the investigation of the police. The old man then seated himself beside Merced, who, overcome by the indignity offered to her revered parent, sank trembling into his arms. The officers, meanwhile, proceeded from room to room, but slight was the search generally made. The old domestics, who seemed to share in the affront offered to their noble master, were gratified, however, with the delicacy and forbearance of the alguazils, who appeared reluctant to perform their task. At length, satisfied with the fruitlessness of their pursuit, they were about to withdraw, when the escribano who accompanied them suggested that the apartment in which the family had collected had been omitted.

Vain was the search, though directed by an inquisitive leader, and though every article of

furniture was examined. During this humiliating exercise of despotic power, the hidalgo forgot the awful cause of his domestic affliction, and, rallying his energies, endeavoured to console his distressed daughter. Doña Mariquita, whose notions of worldly pre-eminence suffered her not to descend to parley with the "liveried traitors," as she called them, was moreover acutely sensible to her husband's rebuke, and her volubility was prudently reserved for a less popular display.

"The carpet!" now hinted the escribano, and those bound to obey proceeded in silence and disgust to raise it from the ground.

"Ha!—what is here?" exclaimed he who directed the search, as he beheld some papers on the carpet being removed—and he stooped to seize them.

The exclamation of the escribano roused the hidalgo.

"The autograph of Carlos de Borbon," ex-

claimed the official; "correspondence with the Facciosos—your Excellency is our prisoner!"

A simultaneous shriek burst from the women, —the blood fled from the hidalgo's face, and returned with deeper hue—his frame shook.

"Monsters!—perfidy!—conspiracy!" ejaculated Doña Mariquita, as she interposed between her husband and the officers.

"Conspiracy, indeed!" retorted the man of law—"high treason against our lawful sovereign, Queen Isabel Segunda!"

"Some dastard villany is here!—wife, be calm!—child!—"

"Your Excellency must bear us company,—a carriage waits at the door."

"Whither?—we go with him!" added the ladies.

"Imperative orders forbid it. Don Ruy, we wait your attendance."

"Cheer!—cheer!—this is a mystery which will soon be cleared away—doubt it not. Fare-

well, wife!—daughter!" exclaimed the hidalgo, as he turned to embrace Merced.

The young creature had fainted, and before they could recal her senses, Don Ruy had kissed her pale cheek, and, followed by the escort, quitted the house of desolation.

CHAPTER VI.

" Ne' lacci stessi
Che ardisce a' danni altrui
Alfin cade, e s'intrica il piu sagace."
METASTASIO.

The Calabozos—Judgment—Prompt Resolves—A Bride.

We must now return to that dreary abode whose inmates are said to be always "at home," and whose narrow cell is frequently exchanged only for one still more close and dark, where, however, cold and hunger no longer afflict, and

where the pressure and clank of the prisoner's chain are felt and heard no more.

Don Ruy de Valmarino, on his arrest, had been immediately confined in an upper story of the carcel. The apartment selected was one so peculiarly constructed as to prevent all possible communication with any living being; while, at the same time, it afforded the best accommodation and comfort which such a dwelling could bestow on its unhappy tenant. All access to the hidalgo was denied; and even the jailor, who received and fulfilled every wish of Don Ruy which might tend to soften the weariness of his solitude, was enjoined to maintain the strictest silence towards the prisoner. Some days had elapsed, and still he had received no tidings of his trial, or intimation of his future destiny. No human face had smiled upon his own during this period. Once, and once only, as he raised himself to the height of the loophole, through which the sun, for a few seconds,

darted an oblique ray, the captive remarked a single grated casement, which looked into the narrow, high-walled court of the prison, and, for a moment, beheld a woman's face, which recalled to him, as she unconsciously gazed through the bars, the features of Alice Downie; but, though the hidalgo ascended each succeeding day to enjoy the transitory sunshine, no one was visible again at the little barred window opposite.

Not far removed from the hidalgo's apartment, another occupant of that house of sighs and tears was situate. In the caverns beneath the basement of the edifice, several cells were reserved for those daring felons who set at defiance the laws of God and man. There such wretches were made to expiate their crimes by a captivity, ending only with life; or, if allowed to breathe once more the atmosphere of the free, it was only in order to ascend the steps of a scaffold. In one of these cells Manuella had

been lodged from the first moment of her imprisonment. Once she was led before the corregidor, interrogated, and her answers noted down; then again conducted to her dungeon, ignorant of her fate. Upon her slender and beautiful form hung the cold, heavy chain; and around an ankle, which nature had fashioned in its finest mould, the shackles of the prison—too large to secure limbs so delicate—were clumsily compressed for the occasion. Thus left in solitude, interrupted only by the daily visit of the jailor with her prison fare, she was, at first, overpowered by the appalling circumstances of her incarceration. The courage inspired by innocence could but ill support her against the horrors of her situation. Fearful indeed was her distress. Debilitated, sickening in the close, damp atmosphere of her narrow prison, weighed down with the burthen of chains which were never designed for one so gentle and sylph-like, her spirit

succumbed under such an accumulated weight of woe. A stupor succeeded the first paroxysm of horror and despair; and, during its prevalence, the hours rolled on unheeded by her. When, at length, brought out for judgment, so feeble was the being whose once elastic step moved with all the cheerfulness of unsullied thought, that she was borne along helpless as an infant which has yet to learn the use of its limbs.

During her examination, the judges—men of reputed learning—saw cunning and deceit in the artlessness and apparent unconcern of the delinquent; and read in those features, which were not, even then, deserted by their intellectual expression, a depth of art which they conceived to be borne out by the fact of her premeditated disguise, to escape detection so soon as the purloined brooch should once be in her possession. Remanded to prison, the learned counsel recapitulated the evidence; the judges summed up; consulted together—agreed. The prisoner

was pronounced guilty, and sentence of death immediately passed.

The day on which Manuella was condemned found Alice no longer the overwhelmed and subdued being she had been during the preceding period of suspense. She received the first intelligence of the event, as she waited on the stairs of the Ayuntamiento. Springing from her inactive posture, as if the line of her conduct were already laid out, she proceeded at once to the house of Montreil.

The Chevalier was still supposed by some to have affairs of importance at court; and those who had learned that he held private interviews with the Infante Francisco and Luisa Carlota gave additional credence to the rumour, that plans of great importance were in progress, since so much mystery was connected with his transactions. Alice well knew that he was in high estimation, however undeservedly, with the leading Carlists; but, from a previous know-

ledge of his past life, she was convinced that his real game of fealty would be played where views of private interest and ambition directed.

At this time, the Queen Regent, from a mere rumour of the approach of cholera, had fled from the seat of government; and, to ensure personal safety, had, to the prejudice of the country's weal, secluded herself almost from all communication. Luisa Carlota, by an opposite mode of proceeding, and an unusual activity with respect to public affairs, would, it was rationally conjectured, win the hearts of the Madrileños. In fact, whilst Christina fortified herself at La Granja against the disease by placing all her subjects under quarantine as regarded herself, the Infanta was seen daily parading the streets of the metropolis, and giving proofs of her determination to share the fate of the inhabitants, in spite of the Queen's twice-repeated summons, by telegraph, to her and her

husband (for Christina foresaw and envied the popularity her sister-in-law would naturally acquire,) to take refuge at the Granja.

Montreil was, therefore, the first to whom Alice resolved to appeal—well knowing his secret influence with either party—in order to obtain a reprieve for Manuella. The spur to his exertions she determined should be his passion for the daughter of Don Ruy. The reward of his success was in her own power. Merced de Valmarino should be the prize for Manuella's life.

She found the Chevalier disengaged, and obtained a private audience. Anxious to save every moment of time, she hastily secured the door in order to prevent interruption. Montreil's curiosity was roused, though he was somewhat piqued at the manner in which she thus fastened herself on his attention, and, without interrupting her, he pointed to a seat.

" My business is brief, but important. Che-

valier, you have access to the palace—to the ear of Luisa Carlota—you have influence with the Infanta."

Montreil nodded with that self-sufficiency which, implying the affirmative, left him, however, designedly uncompromised by confession. Moreover, the mystery he assumed gave, he well knew, additional eclat to his rumoured interviews with royalty.

"Enough, my Lord!" continued she, "you have the power to serve me;—I, to requite you. An innocent girl is doomed this day to ignominious death. I ask her life. Save her! save her, Chevalier!—and, in return, name the boon nearest your heart!"

"That, my good woman, thou canst not bestow."

"Merced de Valmarino!" said Alice, in an under key.

"Ha!—What of her?" said Montreil, rising,

and darting a piercing glance at his companion.

"Merced de Valmarino shall be thine!"

"Thou touchest the main-spring of my soul! —thou dost indeed name the magnet that would draw me to thy service. But how may I believe thee?"

"By possession!"

Montreil appeared to ruminate a few seconds.

"When does the execution of the wretch take place?"

"The day after to-morrow!"

"The notice is short! And when—where shall I find the pledge?"

"To-night—to-morrow—as thou wilt. She seeks an interview with her imprisoned father; this will I promise to the unsuspecting girl. Adjoining the prison dwells the public executioner. Thither will I lead her steps—the keys are in my own possession; for the rest, trust to yourself. Wert

thou her murderer, her dying shrieks would reach no mortal ear."

"Rely on the reprieve! To-night—this very night—bring me my lovely prize!"

CHAPTER VII.

"As it is far from being dishonourable in a surgeon to cut off a mortified member in order to preserve the rest of the human body, as little scandalous is it to an executioner to remove a corrupted member of a republic."

LILIENTHAL SERMONS.

The Executor of high Decrees — The Lists — A strange Visitor to a stranger Host—The Hidalgo and his Son—The Doom—A Revelation.

"THE annual stipend granted by the Spanish government to public executioners," states a contemporary writer, "is very considerable; in addition to which, every execution brings him in a certain fixed sum, according to a list of

regulations drawn up with reference to the criminal code. Moreover, when property is confiscated and sold by order of justice, the hangman becomes pregonero (auctioneer), and his emolument therefrom is frequently great, so that this personage is often a wealthy man. They derive also from private trades and avocations, which they are allowed to exercise, other sources of gain. Some are excellent surgeons and skilful anatomists: they are famed for the preparation of a kind of pomatum, made, it is vulgarly said, from human fat, and supposed to be efficacious in removing the gout. Others are hatters, turners, &c. Notwithstanding an invincible prejudice, which causes one to shudder at their approach, the courtesy of a salutation from a Spanish hangman is always returned. Frequently they are addressed in the street, and even the reverend dignitaries of the church do not scruple to greet them with a friendly 'good morrow.'

"The verdugos of Spain," our contemporary proceeds to say, "are all related to each other, not being allowed to intermarry with any other class. At Salamanca, the hangman is distinguished by a round hat, with a border somewhat of the dimensions we have seen on the head of Basilio, in the performance of the 'Barber of Seville;' and it is decorated with a little silver ladder. He is dressed in a snuff-coloured jacket, braided with red, and trousers corresponding, with a sash of yellow silk. When the hangman of Valladolid goes to market, he is not suffered to touch the fruit or vegetables with his hand, but carries a stick, with a hook at one end, which serves to pick up what he has purchased. Often, in this profession, men are found to possess intellectual merit, and deplore, in secret, that fate which has bequeathed to them the hideous inheritance of those awful functions; and they have been known to expatriate themselves in order to be freed from them.

When the son of the verdugo of Burgos was compelled, by law, to supply his father's place, he fainted repeatedly,—six alguazils brought him, by force, to the foot of the scaffold; but he declared that he would prefer death himself to the horrible task of inflicting it on others. The hangman of Salamanca is known to be so painfully sensitive every time he performs the ignominious duty, that he is seriously indisposed for months afterwards. He is very devout, which, indeed, they all are, and for four-and-twenty hours previous to the day of an execution, they are seen at prayers, which they renew after its performance. They then implore the forgiveness of Heaven for the acts they have done, being constrained by that horrible necessity which compels them to be legitimate homicides.

"It has been remarked," continues our contemporary, "that, in general, they have beautiful and lovely daughters; and it is on record

that the strong affection of a young nobleman so far overcame his scruples of pride, and dread of opprobrium, that he eloped with the daughter of one of these executors of high decrees to espouse her in a foreign land."

Perhaps habit might have hardened Marco Diaz in the fulfilment of his official duties at Madrid,—assuredly none ever performed them with more despatch and less hesitation. Such was the off-hand style in which he ushered into another world the unfortunate wretches submitted to the exercise of his craft, that his colleagues were known to visit the capital, on those interesting occasions, for practical instruction. Calm, imperturbable, were the features of Marco; and the trembling culprit, dismayed at the prospect of a violent death and an awful eternity, was frequently carried, like an infant, to the fatal pillar in the muscular arms of Marco Diaz. Yet the verdugo was never accused of cruelty, or of inflicting unnecessary

pain, and the Madrileños of the Plazuela de Cebada were wont to say—

"Diaz is the verdugo for me."

Courteous, however, as his fellow-citizens were towards him on every other occasion, there was one on which they did not fail to vent their execrations. It is in the amphitheatre of the bull-fights that the Spaniard claims a freedom of speech and judgment, founded on ancient custom, and cherished by the multitude as their undoubted and unalienable right. It is there the unwashed artisans, the descamisados from the Lavapies, lavish, with unbridled tongue, even within hearing of royalty itself, upon a bungling picador or a luckless matador, epithets of wrath and indignation; or bestow, at the cost of their rulers, upon the passive objects of their disapprobation, epithets indicative of their country's aversion.

About five in the afternoon, on a burning day of July, the lists were opened for a correo;

and the hangman, whose duty it was, from time immemorial, to go through the ceremony of unlocking the gates, tendered the keys in his hat to the alguazil on duty. On his appearance, a deafening shout burst from the indignant multitude. The lungs of fifteen thousand spectators hurled their vociferous abomination at the solitary being in the arena, who fled, like a criminal from his pursuers, so soon as he had performed the onerous duty, and was lost amidst the avenues to the circus.

But we leave the busy pageant, with all its paraphernalia of cruelty, to those whom it may interest. Often has the barbarous sport furnished matter for the pen both of poet and historian; and our readers have had a lively exhibition of it in immortal lines—

> " The lists are op'd, the spacious area clear'd,
> Thousands on thousands pil'd are seated round;
> Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
> Ne vacant place for lated wight is found:

Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames, abound,
Skill'd in the ogle of a roguish eye,
Yet ever well inclin'd to heal the wound;
None, through their cold disdain, are doom'd to die,
As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's sad archery."

We will leave to Ellena V——, who was infallibly at her post, in her elegant palco, on the shady side of the amphitheatre, surrounded by the fashionables of Madrid, to relish the exploits of a matador;—to the politic and royal Princess Luisa Carlota, to admire the accomplishments of the unrivalled "Montes" dancing under the nose of an infuriated bull, (which performance Mac Maw facetiously denominated a "horn-pipe,") and then receiving him on the point of his espada, when the weapon became instantly buried heart-deep in the creature as he pursued his headlong career. Our readers will dispense with the display of the carcases of a score of horses, ripped up by the horns of their enemy; nor will many desire to witness the application

of the sharp-hooked banderillas, primed with combustible matter, which the privileged voice of the assembly decrees, to rouse the last energies of the lacerated bull when he begins to shun the lance of the picador; nor the disgraceful infliction of the keen-edged luna, which severs the ham-string, and brings him to the ground, an unresisting sacrifice, to expiate his cowardice by more immediate extinction.

" Foil'd, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
'Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray:
And now the matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thundering way:
Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
Wraps his fierce eye—'tis past—he sinks upon the sand."

The hangman, the first object of attention to the elated multitude, was far distant from the scene of butchery and merriment, when, as was

supposed, he was saluted with the vociferations of the pleasure-assembled congregation; whilst the hired wretch — who counterfeited shame by drawing the *inscrutable* capa over his head— now went to present himself before the real Marco Diaz for the reward of the illegitimate abuse he had borne.

Marco was seated in his own apartment, now deserted, and for ever, by that angel of peace and purity who had, for so many years, enlivened and sanctified his abode. Silent and motionless he sat. At intervals, a deep moan escaped him; big tears rolled down his manly cheeks—nor did he attempt to check their course. There are occasions on which melting sorrow dignifies a man. Those honest tears were pledges of his noble heart's unutterable affection. Hope had fled—his soul was desolate! He was roused from his distress by a gentle tap at the door. To the usual inquiry—"Who is there?"

"Gente de paz" was the reply. "Open,"

continued the voice, in a low key, "my business is urgent."

Marco brushed the tears from his face, collected himself for an interview with a stranger, and withdrew the bolt. He was followed into the apartment by a young man, who glanced suspiciously around ere he unfolded his capa.

The residence of the hangman joined the main building by a narrow staircase, leading from the flight of stone steps over the justice hall. It was at a considerable elevation, and unconnected with the dwellings of his neighbours. Cut off from all communication with them,—after the hours of session, he was the sole tenant of the vast building. The rooms he occupied were the attics of the edifice, but formed a distinct flat of extensive accommodation. All the windows looked upon the Plaza, excepting one small casement at the back, closely barred, which opened on the court of the carcel. The interior arrangements were calculated to strike the

stranger by their propriety and unusual neatness. The genius of taste had presided there; —a degree of costliness, even, was visible in the furniture; and the shining straw matting which covered the floor, was here and there ornamented by circular pieces of elegant carpeting—an uncommon luxury at Madrid, and which only adorns the reception rooms of ladies of fashion. Marco himself, in his retreat, having cast off the livery of his revolting office, was no longer to be recognised as the executor of the last decrees of justice. Equipped in a dress of unassuming neatness, which well became his manly form, he remained standing, and awaiting the stranger's commands.

"In the Carcel de Corte, I am informed, Don Ruy de Valmarino is a prisoner."

"He is."

"Access to the old man, they tell me, is forbidden."

"Even so."

"But not to the public executioner, I presume."

"Caballero, your inquisitiveness may become indiscreet. Whom have I the honour to address?"

"One condemned in effigy for espousing the cause of Carlos Quinto, an aide-de-camp of Zumalacarregui," continued the stranger, throwing back his cloak, "his life is in thy hands."

"Imprudent man!—I *will* not know thee—the door is open. Hence!—away!—thy life is yet thine own!"

"Thou art a Castilian, Marco Diaz. 'Tis enough — thou wilt not betray me! Ere I passed thy threshold, I staked my existence on thine honour. Ruy de Valmarino is my father. —Jayme, his son, stands before thee!"

"Rash man!"

"Nay, more! This hour—this very hour—thou must lead me to my father's prison!"

"Impossible!"

"If thou wilt recal that word!—Behold—count them!"

"Gold, Caballero! . . . but I forgot my office," added Marco, endeavouring to subdue his indignation. "I am a public abhorrence—'tis privileged to insult me."

"You spurn my offer—my entreaties? Then on your head be my blood! Here I remain—hence I move not—but to prison!"

The bell of the carcel for the evening oration struck upon the hangman's ear. Marco started—'twas the hour of prayer for the condemned. He could once more, for a few moments, converse with, and solace, that ill-fated child — his Manuella!

"Begone!"

Immoveable stood the stranger as he observed Marco clasp his head with his hands in fearful trepidation.

"Hear me, I implore!—I have risked my life with thee. Grant me an interview of a few

short moments with my father. As I shall account to Heaven, 'tis filial duty alone which leads me to him."

Impatient to begone, the headsman grasped the stranger's wrist, and led the way. Hurrying into the street, he turned off at a sharp angle, and passed the jailor's wicket. A single sentinel stood there. Seizing the well-known keys, he proceeded, and gained the story where the hidalgo was confined. The officers of the prison were all assembled in the interior of the building, where a priest was reading the vesper service to the condemned. None questioned their passage. The cell-door of Don Ruy was opened, Jayme entered, and the key was turned upon the father and the son. Then passing, breathless with anxiety, the intervening space, Marco reached the apartment of ignominy and despair.

As he entered, the priest was administering the sacrament. Seated on a low bench, her hands fervently clasped, and resting on her

knees, her back against the wall, the wretched Manuella was indulged in this posture, as, in her attempt to kneel, her exhausted strength was found inadequate to the task. Her eyes were closed. The apartment was faintly illumined by a light borrowed, yet too powerful for sight now accustomed to the darkness of a dungeon. Her answers to her ghostly attendant were inaudible, but her lips moved in prayer. The stout heart of Marco died within him. Around stood the corregidor with his alguazils, and the lower and domiciled officials of the prison.

When the sacrament had been administered, the escribano approached the prisoner, and asked her if she still persisted in disavowing her crime. Whether unable to speak, or determined to waste no more useless protestations, she replied not. At this juncture, two alguazils approached, and, lifting her on her feet, supported her in that attitude. The escribano read

aloud the sentence of death. The young girl wildly opened her eyes, and heard proclaimed the ignominious termination of her worldly career. One piercing shriek of agony burst from her lips, and she sank insensible, suspended by her arms between the alguazils.

During this time, and within the walls of that very building, a scene of comparative joy was passing. The old hidalgo folded in his arms his only son; while Jayme, keenly alive to the degraded situation of the author of his being, participated in the stigma, and felt emotions of affection to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

After explanations, the nature of which is already known to the reader, Don Jayme thus addressed his worthy parent:—

"The same estafette that acquainted me with the death of our beloved Juanita, brought the news of your imprisonment. That same hour placed in the hands of our general a

despatch from our English partisans to Carlos de Borbon. Although informed of my double calamity, he summoned me to his presence—

"'Traitors are among the professed supporters of the King,' said Zumalacarregui. 'The reputed agent of the Duke of —— at Madrid—the Englishman Montreil—is an impostor! He has access to our secret councils. The lives of our noble coadjutors are in jeopardy. Don Jayme,' continued he, 'your father's arrest is in consequence of his secret denunciations.'

"The General then presented me an intercepted despatch; it revealed the machinations of the Chevalier — his offers to Christina to recruit foreign mercenaries in her cause.

"'A trusty messenger must speed to Madrid,' continued the brave chief. 'Our partisans must be cheered with the intelligence of the arrival of our royal master at Elisondo. Don Jayme, have you the courage to brave the peril?—The reward of your service shall be a colonelcy.'

"I have performed my mission — the council are informed.—They are on their guard."

"My brave son, away!—depart!—my blessing on thy head! Each moment of delay is big with danger to thy life."

At this instant, a distant scream was heard. The old man's head, which had rested, during their farewell, on his son's shoulder, was suddenly raised. Louder and more distinct grew the voice that rivetted his attention. Well might the sound appeal to his heart,—it was the voice of his daughter—his Merced!

Breathless and erect, the hidalgo stood before the narrow casement which admitted the cries of distress.

"Father!" he distinctly heard; and then that voice grew fainter, and seemed to die away. His hands clenched the bars, — he endeavoured to articulate—his voice failed him.

Jayme rushed to the door,—it was locked without. The massive frame-work shook in his attempt to burst it open.

Again a scream was heard — long, shrill, and piercing. The grey hairs of the hidalgo stood on end.

In the apartment where we left Manuella, another scene was exhibited of painful effect. Restoratives had been applied to the prisoner, and slowly and feebly she opened her eyes. Her chains had been removed. The last hours of the condemned are, in Spain, mercifully alleviated by every reasonable attention to their worldly comfort. They are no longer confined in a dark and loathsome cell; but, if tractable in their wretchedness, comparative liberty is allowed. The heavy fetters are nearly dispensed with, and the cheer of nutritious, and even delicate food, is afforded them. Friends have access, and a patient priest devotes himself to relieve, with the solace of religion, the numbered hours of the miserable one. Awaking from her trance, and feeling her limbs unshackled, Manuella, for a moment, experienced

a sensation of joy. It was, however, evanescent, and hope vanished with it.

Manuella was still beautiful — perhaps never more so. Sorrow deepens the furrows of age; but when its seal is first put upon tender youth and virgin charms, they receive, like a fine engraving, those early and touching impressions which, after constant repetition, wear off and lose their effect. And, oh! what a tablet was here for the sharp chisel of grief;—it had passed over that lovely face,—it had left there the reckoning of years to be cancelled in a few short hours. Her dishevelled hair hung neglected over her forehead; and her hands, now released from fetters, were slowly raised to remove this raven veil—moistened with tears and the damp of the cell.

Not till Marco Diaz approached, and knelt beside her, was Manuella sensible of his presence. She then fell on his neck, abandoning herself to all the bitterness of despair. He

whose touch was shunned by the human race, was now encircled by a wreath of mortal beauty. Thus, in her contracted stay on earth, did her pure spirit surrender the last moments of its worldly career to filial affection. The attendants respectfully drew back to the further end of the apartment. The last hours of the condemned are hallowed.

Manuella first recovered the use of speech.

"Padre!" faintly spoke the wretched girl in Marco's ear. It recalled him to a sense of his duty. Clasping his hands, he sued for pardon—

"Forgive—forgive—my own adopted one! In this hour—sacred, alas, to thee!—the truth must be revealed.—I am not thy father!"

The pallor of death was on Manuella's cheek. She instinctively drew her hands from his neck. He could feel their soft pressure turn to icy coldness. The young girl was now at the climax of mental torture,—this was the severest

trial of all. She sat erect, stone-like, immoveable; she looked like a statue against the white-washed wall of the prison—an ever-silent monument of hopelessness.

"Speak, my all on earth!—this silence is frightful. Speak to me! Alas!—alas!" And Marco sobbed aloud.

At length Manuella turned her inflamed and burning orbs on the executioner.

"Thou art *not* my father!—Do I hear this from thee?" She buried her face in her hands—a flood of tears bedewed them.

"Thou art not my father!" she repeated. "Yes, it is so. I have *disgraced* thee; thou canst not—thou wilt not own me. But, hear me," and she drew from her neck a rosary. "Thou saidst this was my mother's. I have prayed for thee, Marco Diaz, over every bead,—before *that* image — I mean, the plundered one. I have asked thy weal—thy health;—thou hadst it.

"Father!—yes—yes—forgive me," proceeded the affectionate girl, "I shall not call thee so long. And thou hast loved me: every little wish — every fancy, thou hast forestalled. O, what wealth needed I to do the hideous deed? —to rob! —— Oh, Marco—father—thou dost not—thou canst not believe I did it! Say once more that I am thy child!—call me still thy Manuella!"

Marco's form was convulsed — his breast heaved rapidly—his arms clasped her waist.

"Father!—father!—say—say again I am thy daughter—thy very own!"

CHAPTER VIII.

" It is the hydra of calamities,
The sevenfold death; the jealous are the damn'd.
Oh! jealousy, each other passion 's calm
To thee, thou conflagration of the soul!
Thou king of torments—thou grand counterpoise
For all the transports beauty can inspire!"

YOUNG.

The Rencontre—A Sinister Apparition—Intercepted Explanation—Progress of a deep-laid Scheme.

THE report of De Clifford's supposed treachery was soon spread amongst that circle for which it was intended. Previous insinuation, and, above all, the manner in which the plot against Herbert had been executed, confirmed Doña Mariquita in her suspicions. The young English-

man had, she was convinced, stolen into the confidence of her husband, whom he hesitated not to sacrifice to the views and interests of his political colleagues. Merced received the intelligence in silence. She uttered no regrets, she offered no opposition to her mother's angry invectives. She was, however, by no means insensible to the report that blasted the name of Herbert. Though young in years, Merced possessed more decided elements of character than are usually found in her sex. Slow to resolve, yet endued with those traits peculiar to Spanish character, patience and endurance, her choice being once made, its object became a part of her very being. The image of De Clifford was engraven on her mind in those bright and romantic lines which elevate the object above mortality; and to that creation of her fancy her heart had gradually yielded with deep devotion. The conflict of doubt, if any took place on the present occasion, was soon terminated. But if

the victory was decisive for Herbert, it was owing to the confidence she felt in the purity of his mind. Now that the stigma of the world was cast upon him, her just and feeling spirit succumbed not to the charge. Stung to the quick, as if the wrong were her own, she blushed at the bare idea of his alleged baseness. Yet was she at a loss to conjecture what hand had worked the diabolical plot which destroyed the reputation of those two beings for whom she felt the strongest affection. Harassed by conflicting thoughts, she bore up with difficulty under the pressure of her grief; and now that the visits of Herbert de Clifford were no longer received, she felt a pressing sense of loneliness, a distaste for this life, and devoutly sought from the altar and pulpit that solace held out by thoughts of another.

De Clifford himself, as yet unconscious of the scandal thrown upon him, was agitated by doubts and conjectures. The incarceration of

his noble friend, Don Ruy, and the denial he received at the door of that Castilian's house, were equally incomprehensible. One morning, at sunrise, after a sleepless night, he hurried to the Paseo de las Floridas, hoping to dispel his painful thoughts by the aspect of a succession of interesting objects.

There is a great defect in the situation of the metropolis of Spain. No majestic river waters its site; no vessel brings its tribute to swell the luxuries of the capital; not even a barge floats its sluggish keel within sight of the hundred belfries of the city. Noble and extensive arches span some few feet of water. Over a wide bed, the shallow Manzanares spreads its quiet surface, through which the laundresses of the city wade, and decorate the islets intersecting the stream with the many-coloured articles on which their industry has been exercised. From the bridges this has a strange effect,—the waters meandering between the naked ankles of some hundred

washerwomen; whilst the isolated spots of *terra firma* exhibit the gaudy flowers of China, or the equally exotic and fantastic productions of the print-fields of Manchester, bleaching under the sun of Iberia. The banks of the Manzanares, as well as the bridges over it, put to shame the insignificant rivulet running between them. Majestic trees form splendid avenues; whilst, in defiance of the floods which sometimes rise, the little huts of the laundresses dot the margin of the stream. At the foot of the Segovia bridge is a little chapel, built in the bed of the river, the steeple whereof rising scarce so high as the balustrade of the bridge, gave occasion to some waggish observer to remark, that it was built for exportation, and was waiting only for the tide, to sail away beneath the arches. The causeway which skirts the base of the palace is on a level with the bridge, and the descent to the chapel is formed by a flight of steps dug in the bank.

This little edifice has its peculiar devotees.

Its snug and unassuming exterior courts the eye of the more humble Christian. It was the favourite chapel of Juanita de Valmarino, nor less so of Merced. The latter had instituted certain masses to be said for the repose of her sister's soul, and was herself a punctual attendant at their performance. It was hither that, with sunrise, she often directed her steps, attended by an ancient female servant. Following the avenue of the Floridas, unfrequented at that early hour, and bent upon the duty uppermost in her mind, she did not perceive, on the present occasion, one who had for some minutes pursued her steps. At the sound of her name, she involuntarily turned; the person who had pronounced it was De Clifford. There was an expression of grief upon his countenance, a solemnity in his voice, an earnestness in his manner. She moved on.

"You avoid me, Merced? Does affliction

forbid the note of friendship? Am I, then, importunate?"

"What would Herbert de Clifford with the daughter of Ruy de Valmarino? Is not my father in the power of his enemies and your friends? Is aught else wanting to that treachery which the world ascribes to him who now stands before me?"

Herbert had buffetted many a storm of life; had overcome misfortune by philosophic firmness; had conquered adversity by perseverance; had proudly met "the proud man's contumely;" —yet that buoyancy of spirit, that mental hardihood, which had never bowed to the crosses of the world, was rendered powerless by the presence of one female form. No words can describe the astonishment of De Clifford on hearing the charge of treachery preferred against him, and by Merced. The deep mourning of the young girl, the solemnity of her deportment,

the sadness depicted in her manner, fixed him to the spot. At that moment a horseman appeared. Merced became more pale and agitated.

"He comes!" said the trembling girl.

"Who comes?" and De Clifford recognised Montreil. "You tremble, Merced."

"'Tis he, with his prying and stealing glance. Herbert!" — and, forgetting her assumed reserve, she appeared to draw nearer for protection—"I never held in dread a human being till I saw that man."

Montreil passed on. A sinister expression was on his countenance: his lips were compressed at the sight of De Clifford.

"You amaze me," said Herbert, "'tis the Chevalier!"

"Oh, Herbert! to my mind there is evil towards my father in that breast. My inward soul, as it would acquit thee, still whispers, *he* is the destroyer of my parent."

"Heaven forbid!"

"Hear me! For some time past, wherever I direct my steps, his constant foot pursues me. At mass, when I arise from my devotions, there, by the nearest column, he watches me; and fastens on me his looks till the blood glows upon my cheek. O, Heaven forgive me that I should loathe a fellow-creature! Leave me, De Clifford. No, not yet!" continued she, laying her hand on his arm; "perhaps he waits me at the turn of the paseo; 'tis horror to encounter him!"

As they turned the avenue, the Chevalier was indeed seen loitering there, but spurred on his horse as he perceived them approach, and soon disappeared; while Merced, recovering her self-possession, withdrew her hand, which she had involuntarily suffered to be locked in De Clifford's, and, waving it as a parting sign, hastily descended the bank leading to the chapel.

Herbert followed. None were there but the officiating priest at the little altar-piece. Merced

had knelt in earnest prayer. The freedom of catholic worship, where the aspirations of the devout are sometimes mixed with the common colloquy of life, emboldened De Clifford to approach; but the saintliness that shrouded the distressed girl, the associations of late events, the mass for the departed Juanita, shook his purpose. He knelt beside her.

"Hear—hear me, Merced!" at length he uttered.

She heard; and her soul, from its heavenly flight, sank instantly again to earth. A single word might have summoned persons to her protection, might have disgraced De Clifford; but, unable to speak, almost to move, she remained on her knees.

"At the shrine of the All-just Being, be free thyself from injustice! Name my unconscious, my unknown offence! My heart is lacerated, and by thee, Merced! Thou *must* hear me!—thou must declare my accuser and my crime!"

Merced arose from her supplicatory posture. "Your demand," said she, "is just: could I have supposed you ignorant of late events, my pen should have revealed them to you. It shall do so now: here such disclosure would be irreverent. Adieu—and if you can furnish proofs of the innocence you dare to assert at the altar of the living God, my sorrowing heart will thank you."

The solemnity of mass for the dead, which was now proceeding, put a restraint upon Merced's feelings; and no longer trusting to the self-command she usually possessed, she silently retreated and left the chapel.

When Merced had returned to the solitude of her own chamber, her self-possession vanished, and she sank into a chair, overcome with varied emotions. Yet joy and hope predominated; and the tears that fell copiously down her pale, yet lovely cheek, were those of a chastened delight in the entire conviction of De Clifford's inno-

cence. To know Merced, to appreciate her worth, was to love her. Of quick imagination, yet sound judgment; of acute feeling, diffident and unconscious of her own powers, but keenly alive to the merits of others, her heart warmly sympathized in the joys and sorrows of her friends, and returned their regards with interest. She could not be mistaken; she had wronged De Clifford by her accusation.

"Did he not kneel?" said she, inwardly; did not he, whom the world calls heretic, avow, at the altar of my faith, the presence of the All-seeing One? Oh! yes, despite of forms and ceremonies, he is a Christian!—he is honourable!—he is innocent!"

Seating herself at an escritoire her obedient pen followed the impulse of her generous thoughts.

"Merced de Valmarino to Herbert de Clifford.

"You appeal to my justice. In answer, all minor considerations of custom, decorum, and

maidenly reserve, must succumb. You are acquainted with the imprisonment of my father, but know not, it would appear, that his incarceration has been caused by the discovery of certain papers (said to be of treasonable import) concealed beneath the carpet of our usual sitting-room, and placed there by some *friendly* visitor of the family. To that visitor has been given the name of Herbert de Clifford. You, in turn, demand the name of *your* accuser. Every one is so who knows you, except a single individual, whose judgment and heart acquit you. I leave to yourself the detection of the wretch who has so effectually deprived my father of liberty and you of reputation. Hope, so long a stranger, revisits my breast. Don Herbert will yet discover the base calumniator; will re-establish the spotlessness of his own name, and restore to his family, the father of

"MERCED DE VALMARINO."

The seal of the above letter was broken by the hand of Montreil. This proceeding held

out too many advantages to the wily Chevalier for him to allow any small scruples of honour to arrest his purpose; and when he suffered such intercepted letters to reach their proper destination, they became like the marked cards of a gambler, who knows the hand of his opponent. This *ruse diplomatique* frequently placed in his possession the confidences of others. Merced's letter was delivered to him by mercenary slaves to his will, who stood ever ready. He received it immediately after his interview with Alice; and now, as he saw that the defamation attached to De Clifford had not weakened the regard of Merced, he more eagerly sought the chance of ensnaring her afforded him by the reprieve of Manuella. That reprieve, however, he took no trouble to obtain—the reward must precede it. The promise of it, in fact, involved but the expense of a few words, forgotten almost as soon as uttered, and the performance whereof formed no part of his plan. He had other uses for the

small share he still held of ministerial favour, nor did he intend to lessen that fund by interceding for the life of an individual in whose fate he was utterly uninterested. Meanwhile, he determined on encouraging hopes of his success until the prize for his factitious services should be won. This game, he felt, might be carried on to the last moments of the malefactor's life; her death would then put a stop to the importunities of Alice; his debt to her would be cancelled, when earthly reprieve could no longer avail. Such were his calculations as the hour approached which was to deliver Merced into his power.

Herbert de Clifford, ignorant of Merced's generous epistle, was roused to a keen sense of his wrong. Various were his surmises respecting his concealed enemy. "The priest!" at length, he exclaimed; "'tis he!" and, eager to obtain a clue to the black mystery which involved him in its horrible darkness, he presented

himself at the house of Doña Vicentita. He met Rodrigo as he entered. A supercilious smile was on the Jesuit's face, as he darted his keen eye upon Herbert, and passed on. Consternation pervaded the house of Vicentita de Olivares. The Marquis had been arrested that very hour; his lady ordered to quit the capital immediately. A secret correspondence had been revealed to government, and their betrayer was reported to be the Secretary of Montreil.

Forbidden access to Vicentita, irritated at the insolence of the domestics, frantic with rage and despair, Herbert regained the street. He walked on rapidly, unconscious of time or distance, and was far beyond the boundary of the city ere he stopped to reflect.

The day was on the decline when, depressed and exhausted, he returned. The capital, with its incessant bustle and din—its hundred thousand citizens, with their busy routine of daily pursuits—presented a confused scene to him.

His eye was vacant, his ear listless, amidst that wilderness of active, but uninteresting life. As he threaded his way through the crowds returning from the Prado, he felt alike regardless of all. Taking the more unfrequented path, he followed a long passage connecting the streets of Atocha and Prado, but his distraction suddenly vanished as two females, closely veiled, and apparently seeking to elude observation or pursuit, caught his sight. They struck off into one of those lanes leading from the Calle de Carretas to the Plaza Mayor. Herbert, with sudden impulse, followed their steps, but at such a distance as not to draw their remark upon him, or alarm them by any appearance of inquisitiveness. Not the universal mantilla of Spanish women, which veils them from the public eye, nor the increasing darkness of the evening, could conceal from De Clifford's heart the form of Merced de Valmarino.

At length, the females having stopped before

an archway adjoining the Carcel, the elder one appeared to lead the further way. Herbert quickly stood on the threshold they had passed; and a flight of steps was faintly visible as he pried into the building. He ascended, and was soon lost in total darkness. At the top of the steps, a sweep of corridors lay before him, leading to different parts of the building. Feeling his way, he soon became bewildered, and knew neither how to advance or retreat. He had not long remained in this dilemma, when the light of a small taper from a higher story discovered to him the formation of the interior of the building. The light was held by a female, who was now descending a narrow staircase, branching from the stone flight of steps he had ascended; and, from its glare, he ascertained that he had traversed a covered gallery, over the court of the Ayuntamiento, leading to the Hall of Justice. As the female approached, he recognised the English teacher in the family of Valmarino.

The shadow of a pillar, near which he stood, concealed him from view.

Alice descended the chief flight of steps leading to the porch, and shortly reappeared, but not alone,—a tall figure followed her. On the landing he was within a few yards of De Clifford. The taper-light shone full upon him.

"Montreil!" was his inward ejaculation; which, indeed, had almost escaped his lips. The companion of Alice turned suddenly towards the spot where De Clifford stood, as if he had heard that name;—he seemed to listen for a moment, then followed his conductress.

A cold sweat bedewed the limbs of Herbert: the green-eyed monster, jealousy, crept into his breast and infused its poison. Then, indeed, did he feel the force of that passion, the existence whereof he had hitherto scarcely dared to confess to himself. Desperately he resolved, for madly he loved.

The light appeared again, though only for an

instant; and now he heard a step descending the stairs. All was darkness—he moved towards it.

"Who goes there?" said a female voice—that of the sibyl — it was the voice of the stranger in the Paseo de las Lilas,—now, for the first time, identified by De Clifford with the preceptress of the daughters of Don Ruy de Valmarino. The truth glanced, in an instant, on Herbert's mind: "She had betrayed the defenceless girl into the power of a fiend!" An infernal scheme was revealed to him; and as she passed the gate he could distinguish her figure by the light of a fanal that glimmered from the street. Impelled by a combined and irresistible impulse of rage and dread, Herbert ascended the stairs. The faint tones of distant voices reached him. Following the sound, he felt for the door of the chamber whence it issued, and, applying his ear thereto, identified the voice of Merced.

It was at this moment, when unspeakable fury

had seized upon De Clifford, that Don Ruy de Valmarino had heard the distant invocation of her father's name uttered by his daughter. But the efforts of Jayme to force the prison door were vain. What language could depict the hidalgo's agony of mind—his impotent grief? And when Marco bethought him of the parties, and returned to liberate the son, the appearance of Don Ruy appalled him. But ere the latter could speak, Don Jayme, seizing his arm, dragged him forcibly along. His surprise increased, as he beheld the young officer, when they regained the street, dart from his side, and strike into the passage of his own dwelling. In the next moment, he observed him retreating before another man, who now approached, bearing a female in his arms.

In the tumult of his feelings towards Manuella, Marco Diaz, it may be conjectured, had neither time nor inclination to redress the wrongs of a fellow-creature. Weighed down by

his own domestic affliction, extraordinary must the incident have been that could awaken another interest in his breast. Such, however, was the event. His domicile had been rendered the scene of an infamous plot. Exasperation took the place of every other passion; and, speechless with indignation and abhorrence, he firmly grasped the arm of Jayme, whilst the only word he could articulate was—*revenge!*

Such was the position of the parties,—according to the hurried account gleaned from Herbert de Clifford when he was encountered bearing the form of Merced de Valmarino away from the hangman's dwelling.

Don Jayme, fearful lest Montreil should escape his vengeance, suffered De Clifford to support his sister to her home; and now, guided by his companion, ascended to the executioner's abode.

All was silent when the hangman entered the apartment; but Montreil was there, baffled and

subdued. The rescue of Merced was yet as a dream. His surprise and defeat by De Clifford —the latter's sudden appearance—his impotent struggle with his Secretary, who, with surpassing vigour, had felled him to the ground, and, snatching away the fainting Merced, left him confounded and helpless with dismay; all passed before him like the panorama of some incredible romance.

In this position he heard hasty steps approach, and a presentiment of personal danger occurring to him, the Chevalier sprang to his feet. Darkness reigned around: in escape alone lay his chance of safety. He approached the door of the apartment as Marco Diaz rushed in. A gleam of hope entered the breast of Montreil: to gain the door, rush down the steps, and make for the street, were the instantaneous steps suggested to his mind in the desperate predicament in which he now stood.

But Jayme, who had suffered the hangman

to advance into the room, secured the only point of egress—and, as Montreil sprang to the door, a muscular hand grasped his throat, and the arm that was nerved for retribution pinned him to the ground.

CHAPTER IX.

" You took her up, a little tender flower,
Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost
Had nipp'd; and, with a careful, loving hand,
Transplanted her into your own fair garden,
Where the sun always shines: there long she flourish'd,
Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye;
Till, at the last, a cruel spoiler came,
Cropp'd this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness."

OTWAY.

Moon-light and Lamp-light—Retribution and Reparation.

MIDNIGHT'S sable veil was spread over the city; but it was clear and beautiful. No jealous cloud intervened to darken the disk of the moon; each little star stood forth in the transparent firmament; and man alone, shadowed

by the dusky edifices of his own creation, appeared the willing votary of gloom. Nature, lovely in her repose, refreshed by the balmy zephyrs of evening, was redolent with sweetness, and the "desert air" was impregnated with the incense of the jessamine and the perfume of the bergamot.

The last café at the Puerta del Sol was closed, and the gate of the sun might be said to be fairly shut up for the night. If perchance a solitary individual were seeking his home, caution was evident in his guarded steps. The hum of a large city was completely hushed, and the placid light of heaven hung over the deserted streets like a sepulchral lamp in the abode of death.

A stealthy but hurried footstep broke at that hour upon the silence of one of the streets of the metropolis. Pursuing, alongside a dusky line of wall, abutting at the Puerta de los Pozos, an individual, who cautiously avoided even the

glimmering light of the expiring fanals, continued his progress till he had nearly reached the gate, then turned off at a right angle into one of the solitary lanes of the outskirts of Madrid, where the loftiness of the buildings and the narrow passage almost excluded the aspect of the sky, whilst the loneliness and denser gloom, which now favoured his stealthy pursuit, appeared favourable to the designs of the lawless, and such as would avoid the scrutiny of their actions.

At length the person suddenly stopped at a small door, and, directing his hand to a nook in the wall, grasped the handle of a bell, which apparently, from its ready discovery amidst the total obscurity, was well known to him. It was some time before this summons of the bell was noticed by the inmates; but at length, from the upper story, a light was shewn, whilst the being who held it cautiously surveyed, ere he questioned, the applicant for admission.

Pepe Manzanos himself it was who was scrutinizing from the window the unceremonious visitor, whose voice he had no sooner heard than he recognised its tones. Collecting himself, without waiting to reply, he proceeded to admit him.

His guest was no sooner within the house, and the door fastened, than he seized Pepe by the arm.

"Breathe not my name, or my life would pay the forfeit. I have need of thy hospitality for this night. Neither thou nor thy daughter will deny it to me . . . . . You tremble, Pepe," he continued, as he felt the old man's hand relax from his grasp.

"Speak!" said the stranger, when they gained the landing of the third story,—"Speak!—may I trust thee?"

But the thoughts and feelings of Pepe Manzanos were too deep for utterance; and, surveying his guest from head to foot, he endea-

voured to collect himself sufficiently to address him.

"Swear," reiterated his companion, "thou wilt not betray! Behold," continued he, as he threw back his capa, and revealed the person of Jayme de Valmarino, "behold!—'tis human blood that stains these hands! I have taken the life of a man!"

Pepe shook violently, but uttered not a word.

"I only ask shelter till break of day. When the gates of the city are opened, I will go forth. Refuse me not!—thou knowest my head is forfeit to the Queen as a rebel to her cause. What means this hesitation? It is so! Thou wouldst not give shelter to an assassin!"

Pepe Manzanos shook his head.

The deed of murder created no extraordinary emotion. The customs of his country prompted rescue to the assassin from the law. In a land constantly misgoverned, where the rights of fellow-creatures have long been neglected, and

the laws are anomalies of justice, the Spaniard, when injured to the quick, takes the executive into his own hands, and seeks that redress which a corrupt tribunal can no longer bestow; whilst the tacit protection of the community, and the same venal channel to the mercy of his judge, in his turn, shields him from harm. Thus Pepe Manzanos, who heard with dismay, but not with abhorrence, Jayme's avowal of the deadly deed, quickly negatived any suspicion of unwillingness to shield him from the pursuit of justice.

"Hear me!" continued Jayme, now emboldened. "He whom I have murdered was a loathsome villain!" And Jayme poured into the old man's ear a fearful relation of Montreil's attempt, and his sister's rescue.

The passing story conveyed to the heart of the father of Paquita an arrowy pang, as it brought him back to a sense of his own domestic affliction. His attenuated frame appeared sud-

denly animated with the energy of past years—with the vigour of youth; and, in turn grasping the arm of his companion, he entered his apartment. Advancing towards a recess portioned off by a slender partition, he opened the door; then his eye, turning from Jayme, followed the direction of his finger, as he pointed to the occupants of the desolate chamber, and he said, in a low, but distinct and even tone—

"I once trusted thee—and behold . . . . . ."

By the light of a dim lamp was discovered a truckle-bed—its occupant a young, but apparently dying female. Seated near her was one of the sisters of charity, holding a chaplet of beads, and her lips moving with inward prayer. The pale and wan tenant of that bed of sickness was the young, and, but lately, the blooming, Paquita.

Pepe Manzanos, however, suffered not Jayme to dwell upon the scene, but, gently closing the door,—with a collected firmness, which, under

such trying circumstances, would have deserted a man of powerful constitution, bade him be seated; and, perceiving the panic which had taken possession of his senses, himself began the preliminaries of such a portentous interview.

"They tell me she is dying,—and that all that can benefit her now is the comfort of religious duties; but I cannot bring myself to think so, and I have deferred the administration of the sacrament. Alas! I once did hope that my child would have lived to close my eyes. Vain hope . . . . . ."

The old man was interrupted by the sister of charity, who now approached, and whispered in his ear.

"His will be done!" uttered the father of Paquita, as he took his hat and cloak, in order to call a priest to perform the last offices of religion, for the sister of charity had now intimated that his child was sinking rapidly.

Jayme started, from conjecture of his mission, and, in a subdued tone, offered to go in quest of the confessor.

"Remain!" said the venerable Manzanos, with authority. "Destruction awaits thee if discovered in Madrid. Wert thou to expire on a scaffold, it would be no redress for me. Thou hast confided thy forfeit life under my roof, and the rites of hospitality were never violated by the race of Manzanos. Some future day, if thou escape the vengeance of offended laws—when she—" (pointing to the recess from whence a groan was at that instant heard, and the old man sighed,)—"when she reposes where paternal care can no longer avail, then will I seek *thee* out; for know," added the father of Paquita, as he fixed his eye upon the old rapier which he had brought to light, "I was born hidalgo!"

Pepe Manzanos was even dignified in that moment of domestic affliction and self-posses-

sion. The calm of resignation which overspread his features was the result of a principled mind; the blush for his child's dishonour which, with its knowledge, had previously flushed his cheek, the philosophy of his virtues had charmed away; and now, as he stood before the destroyer of his honest home, it mantled, in shame and conviction, in the face of his guest. When he proceeded on his painful duty—perhaps the last he should have to perform for his only child—he left Don Jayme subdued with emotions of remorse and regret, and writhing under the vivid representation and glaring consequences of his villany.

In the absence of Pepe Manzanos, the sister of charity, who was unacquainted with Jayme, freely answered his hurried inquiries. From her he gathered, that the unfortunate Paquita, after giving trust to a seeming friend and lover, had fallen a victim to her confiding attachment; and that her unprincipled destroyer, not satisfied

with abandonment, had published her shame. It was this discovery, together with remorse for the daily consuming grief of her sole surviving parent, that had brought her to this extremity.

When conventual associations shall have passed away, and all that may be remembered of the good they may have effected upon earth shall be summed up in a page or two of history, the institution of the order of the Sisters of Charity, (or Hijas de Caridad,) shall be remembered with the benison of the philanthropist;—and suffering humanity, when the sceptic shall advert to the inutility of cloister life, will record the noble, the magnanimous, the truly religious sacrifice of that sisterhood, who devoted themselves to relieve the ailments of the wretched and diseased, and to soothe sufferings which were loathsome both to sense and sight.

One of this inestimable community had watched at the side of the pale child of Manzanos. Accustomed to the various scenes of

misery which flesh is heir to, she had marked a sudden change in her patient, which, as she believed, boded immediate danger. She now returned to her side.—Insensible to all that was passing around her, her mind estranged from every worldly concern, Paquita would, in appearance, have awakened in an indifferent beholder the saddest reflections. Youth and beauty, when marked for the grave, represent that awful trial which confirms our mortality in its most painful aspect.

But this lovely and afflicted girl seemed to have taken her farewell of earthly ties; whilst her unsteady eye, now directed to the image of the queen of saints, lighted up with a burning taper, was in search of the abode of immortals.

Left to his thoughts, Jayme beheld himself in the odious light of that same villain upon whom he had just avenged a sister's honour; and the blood which he had shed pressed now upon his soul. At any other moment, the appeal to his

conscience would, probably, not have elicited from a heart hardened by a depraved course of life, such symptoms of remorse. But the consciousness of his unprincipled career came, at this instant, forcibly home to his feelings. His own breast had been made to writhe under apprehension of the lewd designs of a wretch upon the honour of his father's house. An involuntary superstition now held his senses in thrall, and through the ignominy with which his paternal roof had been threatened, he felt the visitation of a higher hand upon his own misdeeds and crime.

The slow tinkling of a bell announced the approach of the priest bearing the hostie; and Pepe Manzanos made his appearance,—preceding him to prepare his child to receive the last solace of religion. No train of acolytes accompanied the confessor, for poor were the worldly means of the Christian that needed his shrift. As he waited in the ante-chamber, the moment was

seized by Don Jayme to consult with the servant of the church, and, accompanying his intimation with the donation of some gold, he followed the priest into the dying girl's apartment.

Paquita had been made conscious of her impending fate, and a crucifix was placed in her hands for the approaching ceremony; but so debilitated was her frame, that she had not altered her position, and her gaze remained stedfast and unchanged.

As the ritual proceeded, the responses were given by the sister of charity and Jayme; and as they were all bowed before the viaticum, they did not instantly remark that Paquita, at the first tones of her lover's voice, had raised her head, and when the priest advanced to pronounce the benedicite, she sat erect, her eye dilated and fixed upon Jayme.

Of that moment of consciousness in the patient the confessor eagerly availed himself; and hurrying over the form of a ceremony, for which

he had been remunerated in advance, took the hand of Paquita, now passive from debility, and placing it in the hand of Jayme, called the amazed and bewildered Pepe and the sister of charity to witness as he pronounced the nuptial blessing; whilst Paquita, with the obedience of an automaton, pronounced the irrevocable vow, and sank exhausted upon her pillow. A scene of mute interest ensued; the attention of the party was wholly fixed upon the sufferer. At length, the silent sister gave as her opinion that the crisis of Paquita's danger was past, and hope once more dawned in the heart of the desponding parent; whilst Jayme, restored to his own esteem, began to contemplate the happiness to which he had hitherto been a stranger, in the calm and quiet of social virtue.

The dawn now appearing, rendered it advisable that some means should be adopted to effect his escape from the city; and Pepe Manzanos, with a twofold interest in that being whom, but

a short hour before, while deeming him his enemy, he had bound himself by the rights of hospitality to protect, was now all impatient to urge his departure, and facilitate his escape from the power of the Christinos.

CHAPTER X.

"Todo se logra
Con la ayuda de Dios. Grandes, enormes
Vuestras culpas han sido; mas las borra
Vuestro arrepentimiento, y las compensa
La renuncia que hacéis de vanas pompas
Y riquezas mundanas; todo, todo
Cediendolo al Señor. Muy poderosas
Por otra parte son las oraciones
De esta comunidad, de que la gloria
Tengo, aunque indigno, yo de ser prelado.
. . . . . .
Animo pues, el tiempo no perdamos
Firmadme al punto donacion en forma."

El Moro Exposito.

Charmed Air, and Disenchantment—Ecarté—Repentance and Confession—Expensive Absolution.

The indications of the approaching calamity were wilfully disregarded by the too confident Madrileños; and, indeed, such were the pre-

cautions taken by the authorities to prevent reports circulating of its existence, that the cholera had fairly taken root in the heart of the metropolis ere many were aware of its approach. As for the populace, a superstitious prepossession in favour of their preeminent and heroic city chained them to a belief that the purity of its atmosphere was untaintable, and that the singular property of the air of the delectable city, which extends its influence to the dead, and arrests the progress of dissolution, would be found a bulwark to the living against the attack of pestilence.

This infatuation was evident to the last. Resorts of public amusement continued to be frequented; the Prado, the theatres, the bull-fights, the tertulias, experienced hardly any desertion, or, at least, it was not perceptible,—such timid ones as prudently decamped betimes, taking their flight by stealth, or under

some false pretence, not daring to profess a doubt of the immaculate virtues of the climate of Madrid.

Ellena V——'s tertulias were attended as usual. The very night preceding that day which brought conviction and dismay to every heart, witnessed the habitués of her parties in all the exultation of worldly pastime.

"Toma," said the Countess Miraposa, who had staked fifty ounces upon a hand at écarté, and lost them, "if true that the cholera is with us, vaya hombre, I would advise thee to enjoy them, for I know none it would sooner pay its devoirs to than that sepulchral face of thine."

"Contesita, do not be too confident," retorted her companion. "This same cholera morbus is very gallant; 'tis reported that the ladies receive his peculiar attentions: — he is a very sultan, beautiful Miraposa,—the fairest first."

The retort was indeed awfully verified, and

the event has borne witness that the mortality was fearfully prevalent amongst the beauty and fashion of Madrid.

"Que Majadero! Pues, if thou art a prophet, as we cannot take our wealth with us, another stake upon the game: cut the cards; one for the king!"

"Que viva—Dios!" added, after a pause, the Carlist interlocutor, as he encountered the frown of an officer looking on at the game.

"And so, as I was observing to thee," said one of a group of dandies who were standing at the entrance of the apartment, forming a knot which acted in concert, and, with esprit de corps truly laudable, only let themselves move or think en masse, "so, as I was observing to thee, the urchin was caught in the act; but guess the sequel. The rogue, Señor—ha, ha, ha!—he, he, he!—was a girl in disguise; and who do you think she was? The hangman's daughter!"

"Hombre!"

"Verdad! and she's to be *suspended* to-morrow."

"Let us witness the execution," said another; "they say she is a beauty."

"And only seventeen."

"How romantic!"

Ellena now approached, to victimize these exquisites for the dance. There was a spirit of emulation amongst all; the utmost gaiety was assumed; and if the cholera was adverted to, it was but to despise the danger. Ellena herself was more lively than her wont, or affected to be so; and, spite of the heat of the weather, and the rumours afloat of the pestilential visitation, she pressed her companions to dance.

"Art afraid of the cholera, Dolorcita?"

"Not I!" was she answered, as the damsel rose to accept the dancer Ellena presented to her; and, in sheer bravery of the impending calamity, waltzed away.

"Lost again!" ejaculated Miraposa, mortification inflaming her glance as she dashed the cards from her, and then drank off a goblet of iced water at that moment handed round.

A sudden pallor succeeded the flush which indignation had kindled in her cheek; but, though remarked by the company surrounding the écarté match, as she made no complaint, they continued the bets.

Miraposa's cards dropped from her hand—things swam round her — the beauty of her complexion was gone, a ghastly hue superseded it. The bystanders looked on in dismay: it was no swoon. "It is — it is the cholera!" whispered one to the other.

The cards were now laid aside—the music suddenly ceased—the dancers dwindled away; and when the carriage of Miraposa drove to the gate, no courteous cavalier, no assiduous gallant, was there to hand the Contesa down;

menials supported the infected lady, who was speedily conveyed to her dwelling, whilst a messenger was despatched for a confessor.

The ghostly counsellor of the fashionable beauty was no less a personage than the Jesuit Rodrigo. Worthy of his charge was the wealthy Contesa. Often had the largesses bestowed upon her reverend confessor purchased a necessary reconciliation between her and her conscience. To remove the last burthen which from the fair sinner there would be need of removal, was a labour which he accurately judged would be amply rewarded. Rodrigo flew to the summons.

The Jesuit involuntarily shuddered as he beheld the wreck which a short hour's ravages had made upon Miraposa's charms; she prudently availed herself of that presence of mind which had not yet deserted her, though her articulation had become difficult. Rodrigo in-

stantly applied his ear to the side of her pillow, whilst an attendant brother watched a few paces off.

"Thy moments are few," said the Jesuit, pressing the crucifix to her lips, as her wandering sight no longer distinguished things of this world: "confess all: absolution is here; but if thou carry to the grave thy sins unrevealed, destruction awaits thy soul."

"Mercy—my crimes—ah! 'tis too late—my victim—seek her out—my fortune shall requite the wrong. Paquita—Manzanos—that letter—ha, ha!"

At the mention of her fortune Rodrigo started.

"Lost wretch! you appeal to mortals when you should sue to Heaven. Will thy victim purchase thee salvation? will she ordain the masses for thy soul, and work thy redemption? Thou ravest . . . . . ."

"Save me! save me!" but her incoherent words were no longer understood.

"Witness!" said the Jesuit, as he called forward the assistant brother, and summoned the inmates of the house; then drawing from his bosom a note, which accurately enumerated the possessions of the dying woman, (a cautious proceeding with the brotherhood, who always registered the mundane possessions of their clients for celestial grace,) he placed a pen in the wretched Miraposa's hand; and she confirmed the assignment of her wealth to the holy brethren of the Order of Jesus, of the collegiate fraternity of Isidro.

And now the disease evinced itself in all its ghastliness in the miserable being. The contortions of her frame—the frightful straining of her limbs — her convulsed and distorted features — presented a spectacle which thrilled the spectators with horror.

The viaticum was now deliberately administered to the insensate sinner, the oil and ointment duly applied. The priest pronounced that she was dying like a true Christian; and ere the breath had left her body, Rodrigo was seated at the well-appointed supper-table of the holy fathers of the college of San Isidro, whilst the choice bin of the cellar of the Procurador profusely bled in libations to the newly-acquired wealth of the meritorious association of the Jesuits.

CHAPTER XI.

"Dieu vous garde de mes mains!"
(*Ancient form of salutation of a public executioner in France.*)
V. LILIENTHAL.

Alice Downie and the Superiora of the Señoras Commendadoras—A harrowing Disclosure—The Hermandaz de la Misericordia—An ancient Impost.

THE night of the fifteenth day of July, 1834, will long be distinguished in the annals of the Spanish metropolis not so much on account of those torrents of rain which poured down like a dense flood, but rather for the immediate con-

sequences which have been intimated in the preceding chapter.

In that fearful night which preceded the morning of the execution, a female had been observed for hours, sitting in the same motionless posture, on the steps of the porch of the cloister of the Señoras Comendadoras de Santiago. Her eyes were turned, with searching intensity, towards the east. As the first streak of light illumined the horizon, that statue-like form seemed suddenly to be animated. A smile pervaded the livid features, but rested there for a moment only, leaving them contracted, frigid, and meaningless, as before. So great was the alteration which a few days of mental anguish had wrought, that the faded form of Alice Downie could scarcely be recognized; and her dress, which, during that time, had not been changed, hung about her in total neglect.

Swiftly came the light of day; not wading gradually through the misty veil of northern skies,

but bright and glowing, communing straight with earth. No messenger proclaimed the tardy god, whose rays, an imperious monarch of Spain once proudly asserted, "never set upon his vast dominions." Day and night suddenly succeeded each other, like sentinels relieving duty —dawn and twilight equally unknown.

The bell for matins now broke upon the silence of that early hour. The heavy bolts of the cloister porch were withdrawn, and the massive door moved slowly back upon its hinges. The sisters were assembled in the vestibule; and it was not till the matin prayer was over, that Alice could call the attention of the veiled virgins.

"Her Excellency the Superiora must grant me immediate audience."

"It is not a day of reception—it is the fast of San . . ."

"Imperative is my mission—I cannot, will not, be denied. As you hope for mercy, fly to announce me to her!"

The attending sister hastened to make a report to the Señora Belen, who, curious to know the purport of this pressing case, gave orders that Alice should be conducted to the wicket of the vestibule, to speak with her through the bars.

Alice drew her veil over her face as she approached the grating.

"What is your important mission?" said her Excellency, remarking, with surprise, the disrespectful appearance of a veil over the features of her visitor. "Who are you?"

"An innocent, a spotless maiden, is doomed this day to die on the scaffold!"

"Heaven grant she may be guiltless!" said Belen, crossing herself.

"You have the power to save her life."

"How, the power? You are unknown to me; the condemned one as well—even the crime she is accused of."

"Robbery of the church."

"Ha!" said Belen, "the purloiner of the sacred brooch of the immaculate Virgin de las Angustias?—that circumstance *is* known to me. She was detected in the act; and her premeditated crime confirmed by her disguise. Señora, no more; I cannot serve you! Vaya usted con Dios!"

"Excellency!—one moment. You remember this face?" said Alice, casting aside her veil.

The Superiora turned back, and looked upon Alice, whose eyes dropped as they encountered her glance. Fearfully fell that look upon her, as Belen rushed up to the bars, and thrust her hands through the narrow apertures, as if to grasp at her suppliant, who tremblingly shrank back. Still, those white hands, protruded through the bars, strove to reach their victim; the face of the frenzied nun was forcibly pressed against the wicket, as if she were unconscious of the impediment to her progress; whilst her

eyes rolled terrifically, and her convulsed features exhibited the aspect of a maniac.

Alice shuddered; but the momentous duty she had entered upon recalled her energies.

"As God is my witness, your child lives!"

The nun muttered indistinctly, and her teeth jarred again with the paroxysm of unutterable horror.

"Oh, hear me!" continued Alice, "hear me! The deed of murder *was* decreed to me—hear how I performed it. Night and day I secretly watched the infant's life—fed, nursed, and loved it, even till this hour. The innocent I saved became my treasure! Fearful lest heaven or man should steal my all, I sought a protector for her in one whose desecrated rank shut him out from society. Thy daughter's reputed parent is the hangman of Madrid. My Manuella, doomed this day to ignominious death, thy flesh and blood! . . . . . Oh! wilt thou not believe? Speak, noble Madam!—for mercy!—for her

life! As my soul shall answer and seek compassion at the throne of an Almighty One, she *is*—" and Alice uttered, with appalling solemnity, a dreadful oath—"She *is* thy child!"

Truth possesses a divine stamp of its own: its counterfeit may pass in ordinary circumstances; but when events of deep and absorbing interest call forth its aid—when the soul lends it force in the speaker—it sinks its impression deep into the hearer's heart. The manner and tone in which Alice had pronounced the last words effected a change in Belen. Varied and overwhelming were the sensations which rapidly succeeded each other within her breast. Her countenance betrayed the agony of her soul. At length, the mother was triumphant—all other considerations succumbed to one. She hurriedly addressed her companion—

"Fly!—fly!—delay the horrible preparations!—I will write to the Queen."

"She is at La Granja."

"Heaven!—and I a captive!—else, ere the fearful hour, fleeter than that of steeds a mother's foot should be! Rodrigo must be applied to,—to him!—to him!—is she not his own?"

"He is her *accuser!*—her false accuser!—but knows not 'tis his own child."

"Threaten that, if he save her not, here—here—before the congregation—before the world—will I proclaim his crimes!—his perjuries! Haste! Say, does my own know who is her mother? Hast seen her since?—haste! O God!—these bars!—my child!—my child!"

Alice, herself weighed down by intense despair, was yet shocked at that which the real mother of Manuella exhibited. When the paroxysm of the latter had somewhat subsided, they again conferred hurriedly for a moment, and Alice then hastened out of the convent.

The day advanced—the dreaded hour approached! The first group of loiterers usually

collected in the Puerta del Sol, wore an unwonted aspect of suspicion and dread, which was not a little heightened by the solemn sound of the bell of the church of San Martin, which announced a public execution. No country in the world can boast a more pompous assortment of church bells than Spain. "When Buonaparte first presented himself, with his yet invincible army, before Madrid," says a contemporary, "all the bells of the city played simultaneously, and such was the astounding din, that the oldest veterans of the Imperial Guard turned pale. It was in the hope of scaring the enemy away; yet, nevertheless, the French entered the capital. But the superstitious yet affirm, that the failure was in consequence of a single small bell of the Convent of Bernardinos having missed time, otherwise Napoleon would have failed in his criminal enterprise."

Every parish of the city has, in fact, its complement of bells. The campana grande is what

we should call the "great Tom;" the "symbanos" are next in size; then follow a range of four, or upwards, of the "pasqualigas." To a Spaniard's ear there is a language in these sounds. Two rapid strokes, followed by a pause, proclaim the dying moments of a female; a smart, gay ringing, announces the last agony of an infant; and three loud strokes of the campana grande, followed by a pause, mark the departure of the spirit of man.

But it is a privilege of the bell of the church of San Martin to announce the fearful execution of the law upon each wretch doomed to suffer upon the scaffold, and then the awful "bell for the hanged" booms with studied solemnity, alternately varying and vibrating, with deep effect, in imitation of the last sufferings of humanity.

Long before the "Diario de Madrid" is circulated, the morning of a public execution is made known by the meritorious brethren "de la Hermandad de la Misericordia." At break of day,

they take the round of every parish, soliciting, with prudent economy of time, for the funeral expenses of the condemned, ere yet the criminal has expired; and report says, that if the money thus collected were wholly devoted to its ostensible object, magnificent, indeed, would be such rites of sepulture. Forcibly do the brethren appeal to the charitable, whilst they tingle incessantly a very small tin bell, which, distinguished from all others by its peculiar sound, frets the ear, and sets the teeth on edge, thereby more speedily aiding the collection of alms, as the donors, rather in mercy to their own nerves than in order to aid the ostensible object of contribution, subscribe, to get rid of the nuisance.

"Alms for the burial of the condemned," cried one of the order of La Hermandaz de la Misericordia, in a whining tone, duly accompanied by a shake of the alms-box, and of the little tin bell, as he addressed a group standing ear the Fountain of Good Success.

"Vaya con Dios, Padre!—burials are becoming too frequent; our maravedis are wanted at home."

"C——!" exclaimed another; "if the contributions were always fairly employed, the condemned might be interred in coffins of gold. I will save my donation for yourself, Padre, when *you* come to the gallows!"

"Insolente!"

"The day may not be far off, holy tax-collector; for it is asserted that some of your cloth have poisoned the fountains—a Jesuit was caught in the act. This is no cholera that is carrying off the people—'tis poison!"

"Foul play, I swear!" observed another; "owing to these hungry carrion crows. Were the truth known, half the men hanged, too, are condemned for the burial alms! Who is it suffers to-day?"

"A child, they say. Egad! the hangman's daughter—caught purloining a relic."

"Strange, that! Is her father to be her executioner?"

"Report says, that one is to arrive from Valladolid for the occasion."

Down by the gate of Toledo, as early as daybreak, there was a sinister-looking being standing by the road-side, waiting for the arrival of the first market-man who should drive an ass. It was a tax laid, in the olden time, upon the first comer, whenever an execution took place—to demand his beast for the purpose of dragging the criminal to the scaffold. This additional ignominy was sometimes remitted, but not in the present instance—the heinous offence of the condemned being supposed to deserve every stigma attending its public atonement. "Garrote Vil," said the Diario; and that officious personage, whom we may describe as aide-de-camp to Jack Ketch, was accordingly on duty, to secure an ass for the occasion.

No sooner was the gate of Toledo thrown open,

than the sons of traffic, whose marketable commodities burthened many a patient animal, pressed forward to enter. They were, however, not a little discomfited, when the said dignitary proceeded to make his election ere they were suffered to pass on. Nor was any one of them ambitious of the honour bestowed on his beast by the preference given.

"Demonio!—bad luck to thee!" muttered a manchego, as he unloaded his ass; "what winning beauty was there in thee that thou shouldst become the favourite? Faith!" he continued, addressing the representative of the executor of high justice, "he is but a poor one; methinks you might have selected a better."

"Good enough, I warrant ye; and a gentler burthen never was his lot. Despatch!—the beast will not have hard duty."

"Whose neck do you twist to-day?"

"As fair a one as ever wore a necklace. I

would rather see my arm fastened round it than the garrote."

But the attention of the speakers, as well as that of all Madrid, was now drawn to that awful visitation of Providence already alluded to in our pages. On the morning in question, such was the mortality occasioned by the pestilence, that ordinary avocations were neglected, and the dismayed populace greedily listened to rumours, which gained additional horror as they spread through every street and avenue of the city. The progress of those revolutionary symptoms, suspicion and disgust, must form the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

" Caderai in seno la cittade un dardo
Dal ciel senti invisibile.—' *La Peste!*'
/Sclamò la prima vittima :)—' *La Peste!!*'
Sclamò chi primo udilla ; e la Cittade
Divenne, in men che il dico, eco lugubre,
Ch ovunque repetè.—' Peste ! la Peste !' "

SORELLI.

A Fearful Visitation—Popular Excitement—Prejudice—its Consequences.

THE monkish system, wherever still entertained, has materially degenerated from its primary principles. At that period, when the devout recluse sustained existence only by " bread, water, and a lettuce," veneration was universally paid to

each confraternity, and a desire for worldly enjoyments never entered the monastic abode. In the course of time, however, the strict regulations of the pious brotherhood have been lamentably infringed upon, and such at length were the indulgences which a cloister life offered to the affluent, that even the voluptuary has sought the sanctuary of religion, wherein to riot and yet conceal his profligacy and vice. Those monasteries, however, which have observed to this day their primitive laws of abstinence and charity have become the safeguard of religious communities at large, and the popular reverence and support awarded to them have been extended, in some degree, to their dissolute brethren.

In Spain, the principal European hold of these professors of humility, the people have not been indifferent to the merits of the respective orders; and whilst the more opulent ranks among the wearers of sackcloth have alienated popular affection by their pride and rapacity,

the poorer and more pious orders have recommended themselves by their solicitude for the salvation of souls—by sharing with the starving wretch the provisions they had begged from door to door—by administering medicine to the sick, and comfort to the dying. Thus obtaining for themselves unbounded sway over the minds of men, a kind of borrowed protection from the animadversion of the laity was obtained through them by such holy brethren as had estranged themselves from general reverence.—But restrained odium gathers strength with time; and suppressed hatred, like a smouldering fire which rages within, finding a vent at last, all around is conflagration and destruction. Such a vent was in the present instance at hand—the cholera approached, and haughty priestcraft trembled.

That dreadful pestilence which made its appearance in the East in the middle of the fourteenth century, and spread over the Continent of the Old World, was ascribed by contempo-

rary writers to corruption of the atmosphere—to the appearance of myriads of small serpents, together with numerous and large vermin. The last and greatest sufferers by that awful visitation were the unfortunate Jews. "A belief spread over several countries that they had produced the pestilence by poisoning the wells and fountains, and, in many places, they were literally exterminated." A similar suspicion was now attached to the despised and execrated Jesuits, when the cholera visited (at this period of our story) the city of Madrid.

The public mind was at that time in a ferment. The metropolis, torn with the evils of civil war, the centre of attraction to the discontented, the hot-bed of the exaltados, was ripe for revolution. Fearful were the ravages of the disease when it first broke forth. Unprepared, from a blind confidence in their security, the first symptoms were discredited; and the Madrileños, trusting in the elevated position of

their city, and the bulwark of the Guadarrama mountains, could not imagine the possibility of the approach of such an enemy. It was therefore not surprising that they should ascribe the cause of this awful visitation to mortal agency, or that the rumour, that malignant enemies had poisoned the waters, should be readily believed by an ignorant populace.

Meanwhile, the spasmodic cholera baffled all the skill and learning of the faculty: now travelling, even against the wind, at the rate of more than a hundred miles a day, despising alike temperature and atmosphere; triumphing over frost itself; now adhering to a particular line of road or river, depopulating town after town in its progress; then, skipping over a whole province, as if in mere wantonness of mischief, here and there pouncing only upon a single victim. At length, Madrid was marked for its special visitation; there, banquetting, as it did, on the

very heart of the country, a nation trembled beneath its unsparing virulence.

Early in the month of July, 1834, some instances of sudden death alarmed a class of individuals every where to be found under the denomination of "secure ones," and a flight of many persons, under various pretences, was observed; but, up to the fifteenth of the month, the indications of cholera were insignificant. In that night, a heavy shower having fallen, the terrific disease at once spread with awful rapidity.

In all great cities, there is a particular part wherein are congregated the ignorant, the idle, the depraved. In filthy courts and alleys are to be found the loathsome habitations of the lowest orders of the vicious or the wretched. In Paris, this quarter is called La Halle; in London, St. Giles; in Madrid, the Lavapies. Yet almost every parish of these great cities

contains some peculiar resort for such characters. As civilization has advanced, indeed, those purlieus, at least in London and Paris, no longer the dread of the honest and respectable citizen, are frequently to be traversed without fear of personal danger, although instances of open depravity may sometimes shock the sense of the uncontaminated. But at Madrid, where customs and habits yet retain some stamp of antiquity, we discover a strong line of demarcation between society.

The confines of the Lavapies, that noted and dreaded portion of the Spanish capital, are never passed after nightfall by any wary individual, unless he is compelled, by some urgent necessity, to infringe upon its boundary. The central spot of this exclusive neighbourhood is an open space, whereupon several streets abut, forming an irregular polygon, somewhat resembling the noted "Seven Dials," in London, but of a far more wretched appearance. Ac-

cumulated filth, dilapidated dwellings, and a squalid population, shock the eye, whilst the unblushing stare of the ragged manollas seems to mark any wealthy stranger for their prey,—to secure which the assassin's knife would not be spared. The characteristic apathy of the Spaniards wears, among this refuse of the population, a terrific aspect to the foreigner. He would imagine that no law restrained them but their will; that their ferocious independence constituted a defiance of all bonds, human or divine. The fair sex, in particular, exhibit those extremes of character especially belonging to them. That native impetuosity, which is subdued by civilization, and governed by good example and education, degenerates, in the untamed and uncultured breast, into a savage ferocity, which, whenever called into action, prompts them to unblushing and monstrous excesses.

In this district of the city, on the morning of

the 15th of July, 1834, a scene of despair and horror was displayed. In those densely-crowded purlieus, the pestilential monster, Cholera, had made its first appearance. There, miserable, half-famished wretches were seen crowding to the street, writhing and howling; whilst others, more fatally attacked, often lay expiring on the thresholds, uttering fearful blasphemy.

"The waters are poisoned!" it was murmured: "'tis the work of the Jesuits."

"The waters are poisoned!" repeated the by-standers. "The waters are poisoned!" shouted the multitude; and the cry spread, with fearful rapidity, throughout the entire city—as the first ripple of the gathering storm is followed by the quick successive wave, gradually enlarging till it swells into tremendous billows, spreading afar the foam of the angry element, and dashing to earth all that would oppose it.

"Death to the Jesuits!—Death to the Franciscans!"

"Muerte!" was the signal-cry of the dishevelled and exasperated manollas.

"Muerte!" resounded from a thousand lips—a thousand knives were flourished in the air, and many an Amazonian knee was exposed whilst releasing the Andalusian dagger from its garter-hold.

The infuriated rabble rolled on—its vengeful numbers increased whilst continually advancing. Death kept pace with that multitude, thinning its irregular ranks, and leaving on his track both the dying and the dead.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Hollow was his aspect,
Graves in his smiles, death in his bloodless hands."
LEE.

The Garrote—An Execution—Impotent Grief—A Mother's Despair.

To an indifferent observer, Madrid would have offered a strange appearance on that morning, as viewed from the belfry of the Convent of the Señoras Commendadoras de Santiago. Bustle and commotion existed, but in particular places only. The leading streets were comparatively

deserted; and, although the hour of gossip approached, no tertulias were forming in the avenues to the Puerta del Sol. That din, that incessant hum, wherein the public cries blend with the tramp of horses and rattle of carriage-wheels, forming at a distance a confused and rumbling sound, was no longer heard. The voices of the indefatigable galliegos were hushed, as was likewise the incessant cry of "Agua, quien bebe!" The venders of ice-water and barley-water, of new gazettes, sausages from Estramadura, tomatas, milk-rolls, Seville olives, — all were silent. But the bells, the thousand bells, were in motion; they proclaimed, without ceasing, the departure of the spirits of men. One alone, however, was audible to the ear of her who had ascended the belfry. This was the boom of the campana grande of San Martin: it was the death-bell of Belen's earthly hope. The unclouded and glorious sun rose that day over the devoted city; its sultry

beams shone brightly upon the mass of buildings clustered in the metropolis, upon the commotion in her streets, the currents of people verging to one point, the deserted markets, the broad though now solitary avenue of Alcala, and the forlorn-looking Prado.

All these objects passed undeeded under the gaze of the nun. What sympathies had the betrothed of Heaven with the cares and vanities of mortals? But her large full eyes were rivetted with fearful intensity upon one point. At a distance stood the carcel and the scaffold. She could distinguish the roof of the prison; but the narrow streets around it impeded farther view of that building. Ever and anon the glittering sabres of the Escuadron Ligero flashing through the openings of distant buildings, proclaimed the duty they were upon. Beyond that spot she could make out the more open spaces of the Calle de Toledo; farther still, the corn market, the booths of the venders, the

dilapidated and ancient fountain in its centre, and, lastly, the ignominious structure for the condemned.

A square platform of rough planks was erected six feet from the ground, with a flight of steps leading to it. A few feet apart, two pivots were fixed, with narrow seats branching from them. On one of these white pivots of unpainted wood the mother's eye was fastened; the other was not discernible from the belfry, the houses on that side the Plazuela de Cebada obstructing an entire view of the scaffolding.

Around the platform a troop of cuirassiers was drawn, four deep. Upon it lay in readiness the implements of death—the singular instruments, or screws, for the garrote.

With due regard to economy both in expense and trouble, which are matters of some importance in a public execution at Madrid, the life of a single criminal is often spared until

more are adjudged to bear him company; and it so happened, that at the period of Manuella's condemnation, a wretch had been some time lingering in chains, till another execution should divide the expense. This accounted for two pivots being erected on the platform. Moreover, the least guilty criminal, on such occasions, takes precedence, and is despatched before his fellow-sufferer arrives in sight of the scaffold; the greater villain being thus condemned to meet his own fate with the ghastly appearance of a newly-strangled corpse before his eyes.

Few were, on the present occasion, collected in the Plaza to witness the dismal scene, whilst death was making such general havoc in the devoted city. There was, it is true, a group of half-naked Valencianos at that opening of the square which looked up the street of Toledo, whence they could distinguish, at the same

time, the scaffolding and the earliest approach of the sufferers.

"Who will die first?"

"Boca Negra, to be sure, the murderer!"

"Is he the least guilty?"

"Of course; the woman has pilfered from the church. Think'st thou 'tis not a greater crime to rob God Almighty than to take a man's life?"

"Has he killed many?"

"As bloody an assassin as ever thinned the population of La Mancha; El Cuvero was a mere barber to him."

The conversation of these worthies was interrupted by the appearance of the criminal who was first to suffer. Three alguazils on horseback, in their peculiar black costume, with small white wands, were stationed before the wicket. At a signal given, the cavalry drew up across the avenues leading to the carcel. The

sacred bell of the hostie was now heard, and slowly the group issued from the gate. A few bare-headed devotees appeared, bearing a burthen between them. It was the perpetrator of many assassinations, now about to atone with his own blood for that which he had shed. Manuella's more heinous crime, the plunder of Holy Mother Church, doomed her to suffer last.

The murderer was wrapped in a yellow woollen frock, while a skull-cap of the same colour and material was drawn over his brow. Such was the San Benito garb appointed for malefactors since the institution of the Inquisition. He was, in order to mitigate his sufferings, placed in a basket, or shell, of straw matting, supported by penitents, who for this charity obtain from the church the remission of sundry peccadilloes; whilst the ass, which was ready harnessed to drag him to execution, fell

appropriately, and nothing loth, into the procession.

It was altogether an imposing scene. The devout friars of the Hermandaz de la Misericordia, pouring with loud voices into the ear of the criminal the prayers for the dying, whilst the image of the Redeemer was held to his lips. They proceeded with measured steps, except when the fainting wretch drooped insensible in his bier. They then halted, till powerful restoratives recalled him to life. Thus alternately pausing and proceeding, an hour elapsed ere they reached the place of execution. It was a cunningly-devised scheme, that long and tedious journey to the scaffold; it had completely unnerved the murderer, — he who had once waded unmoved through streams of innocent blood. When lifted from the basket at the foot of the scaffold, that robust and sinewy form sank to the ground; a last appeal

was made to his conscience; and the capuchin who stood there to shrive the sinner, was seen to shrink from the tones of that feeble voice, which now, when hope had fled, revealed unheard-of atrocities. The shrift was over; the almost lifeless criminal was carried up the steps, and bound to the seat prepared; the priest, with a loud voice, rehearsed the credo, which the last accents of the wretch repeated; the fatal steel was fastened round his neck; the screw turned at a preconcerted passage of the prayer; a handkerchief was suddenly thrown for a moment over his eyes, the final wrench of the garrote given, the spine was broken, and the spirit of the murderer had fled.

Again the procession collected. The priests, the executioner, returned to attend upon another sufferer; the body of the murderer awaited its fellow-corpse; the handkerchief was removed.

. . . . .

During this awful interval, Belen was a prey

to mental anguish, which continually increased till her fevered, frenzied brain could no longer perform its functions. The practicability of eloping from the cloister did not at first occur to the distressed nun; but when the climax of her despair bewildered her judgment, she remembered no barrier between her and the world—no bar to her step. Frantic, yet resolute, she proceeded to seek an egress; but the wildness of her manner had alarmed the sisterhood—her raving appeared to them sheer madness, and every outlet was instantly secured.

"To the belfry!" exclaimed the exasperated mother, and she flew with unearthly rapidity up the steps, followed by the terrified nuns. Thence she descried the first movements of the soldiery, as they filed between those buildings that encircled the prison-house. She saw the waving light reflected from their arms; she beheld the cohort advance. Where the street widened before the mansion of the Duke de

Rivas, she caught a glimpse of the uniform dress of the condemned.

"'Tis she! 'tis she! my child—my daughter!" The first emotion was joy at beholding her, for at that distance she doubted not it was Manuella. She was ignorant that another was that day to die on the scaffold; and the distance and dress of the condemned, which is nearly alike for both sexes, deceived her vision.

"'Tis my child!" she repeated, as she stretched her arms and body beyond the balustrade. She was superb in her beauty at that awful moment — in her extatic recognition of her lost child. She reflected not that distance concealed those lineaments; she had been told—she knew—she felt—that Manuella was her own offspring; and the mother's mental eye, piercing space, dwelt on the loved features of her daughter.

"Pray for her," said Belen, in tones of heart-rending anguish, that sank deep into the

bosoms of her attendants. "Pray for her, she is innocent! O yes, she is—she is! . . . .

"She is to be saved! Yes, yes, she will be saved! See, see! Do you not see? There—there—the fathers of the Hermandaz—they are at their post." . . . . . .

Belen was right. Though nearly a mile off, she had discovered a group standing before the chapel of "Our Lady of Grace." She knew the brotherhood de la Misericordia would watch every chance of snatching the condemned from the vigilance of the guards, as they glory in bestowing the asylum of the church. There rested the only hope of the forlorn mother. She fondly relied that Don Rodrigo, acquainted with the circumstances above related, would co-operate with the Hermandaz to liberate his own child, and give it the refuge of the holy altar.

When every hope hangs upon a single chance, the tenacity of the grasp is wonderful. Already the procession had passed the Church

of San Felipe, the College of the Jesuits. It slowly approached the Plaza; the choristers, bearing the crucifix and censer, now passed the chapel of Our Lady of Grace, the holy Hermandaz following. Now Belen beheld in imagination the saviours of her child pounce upon the shackled victim, and bear her away. . . . . Vain was the thought—the criminal approaches the scaffold.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Divinity
Itself were not secure, without a guard
Of bolts and flames, to awe rebellious man."
SOUTHERNE.

The Last Hope—Mundane Counsels opposed to Eternity—the Secret disclosed—Narrow Escape.

ON the morning of that fatal and memorable day, a wild-looking, woe-begone being was seen hurrying along the Calle de Carretes. Her gait and speed would have attracted observation at any other time; but in the then exasperated

and terror-stricken state of the public mind, she passed unheeded. None, indeed, would have recognised Alice Downie. Her countenance had become hideous. Exhaustion and excitement had left a cadaverous hue upon her face. Her eyes, sunk in their black and hollow cavities, were scarcely visible from beneath the inflamed and swollen lids. Her apparel was neglected and unsightly; and though her speed was urged beyond her natural strength, yet her jaded limbs still bore her onward. Once she fell, and her worn frame seemed shattered as it lay in utter prostration on the pavement. But Alice rose again, and appeared, by increased speed, only anxious to recover the time lost by the fall. Twice already that morning had she visited the College of the Jesuits. Rodrigo was not there, and now a third time she sped thither, impelled by her last hope. Turning out of the Calle de Carretas, she perceived the soldiery surrounding the carcel;—it was in her way to

the Jesuits. None were suffered to pass;—the condemned was leaving the prison. She heard the bell;—it was the knell of Manuella. Compelled to take a circuit, she at length gained the Collegio;—Rodrigo was not yet returned.

Where was he, when the signal was given for removing to her last abode the innocent one, whose reputation was blasted, whose life was sacrificed, by him who dared to hold the sacred viaticum—to bless, in the name of the all-seeing One, the penitents at His temple? At that hour, where?

It was a light burthen which the penitent devotees now supported. The alguazils have waved their white wands, the signal to march. Instantly the tramp of horses was heard falling in line at each avenue to the carcel, as also the loud recital of the burial-service by the train of monks, each bearing a lighted taper, and the low murmur of those few who, at that moment, forgot the general calamity to bestow their com-

passion on the young sufferer now borne to the scaffold.

With that premeditated confusion which characterizes a public execution in Spain—prolonging the agony of the wretch by unnecessary stoppages—the procession slowly advanced. The condemned was almost concealed by the shell of basket-work in which she was carried, and by the persons who surrounded her. At every few steps the ceremony of a pause was gone through, whilst the supporters of the bier rested it on the stones. Then was observed the confessor bending over the captive, and imparting the solace of religious hope.

At the first tones of that voice the dying girl opened her eyes;—they met the gaze of Rodrigo. A thrill of horror shook her limbs, her orbs closed again, and her lips moved in silent prayer. Her soul, now communing directly with her God, forestalled the termination of her earthly

career. Mortal hopes had fled. Heavenly ones occupied their place in her breast. But the vampire — the destroyer — was there; he brought her back to the consciousness of her state by infamous, although whispered, insinuations. As she recited her inward prayer the foul fiend, prefixing aloud a sacred invocation, revealed, to her ears alone, the ungovernable passion of his heart.

"Save thyself, and be mine; reject me, and the scaffold awaits thee."

Manuella's lips moved faster, as if to drown with devout aspirations the temptation of the evil one.

"Corpus Christi, salva me."

"Be mine!" said the priest; "the protection of holy ground is before thee."

Manuella prayed aloud—"Protege me, quæso ab insidiis inimici."

"Gloria tibi, Domine;" responded the priests.

"Passio Christi, inebria me. O bone Jesu, exaudi me; ab hoste maligno defende me;" hurriedly recited the agonized child—

"Ut cum sanctis tui laudem te,
In sæcula sæculorum."

Amen, chaunted the priests.

At that moment was heard a sound as of many voices;—it foreboded evil. Loud and louder it came. People were running in terror from the corn market; and now, turning into the Calle de Toledo, far in the distance, a dense mob was seen rolling towards them.

"Die, die, infatuated wretch!" and Rodrigo held the cross to her lips as he spoke emphatically in the ear of the helpless girl. "Die! if my passion cannot appeal to thy heart, my vengeance shall. Ere an hour has passed, thy strangled body shall meet the gaze of a vulgar populace;—then, quartered by the executioner's axe—nailed to a gibbet—thy mutilated limbs,

steeped in sulphur, shall defy the raven's beak, that they may be a more lasting terror to evil-doers. Thy severed head, placed in an iron cage, shall be suspended at the city's gate—a hideous warning to the sacrilegious plunderer."

Faster moved the lips of the condemned—louder was her prayer. "In hora mortis mea, voca me."

The blasphemies of Rodrigo were again interrupted—the bearers resumed their task—the procession advanced.

"Manuella!" groaned a voice; the girl again opened her eyes.

"Ma—nu—el—lita!" Alice's form lay stretched across the litter, which broke down from the hold of the bearers.

The design of Rodrigo was foiled by her presence. "Drag away the maniac!" he exclaimed.

At the sound of that voice she sprang to her

feet, gasping for breath, and with a frenzied grin of sudden joy, she attempted to articulate his name.

"Rodrigo!" at length burst from her lips with a wild scream. Then followed a jargon of words, rapid in succession — a confused disclosure of events hurried in a breath. The cross in the priest's hand shook violently; a sensation of palsy crept through his frame.

The procession had meanwhile come to a full stop. The infantry who preceded began to fall back; a rush of persons flying towards them had, in fact, broken the lines of the soldiery stationed on each side.

"Fly, fly, for life!" shrieked several voices. A friar hurried past; his hood was torn and stained with blood. "Refuge!" he cried, and dashed through the lines of the priests as he endeavoured to reach the portico of the Collegio. A medley of shrieks and shouts, of oaths and groans, became more and more audible.

"Mueran los Frailes!" was the universal war-cry of the infuriated mob. Bewildered, dismayed, with a slight conjecture of the cause of alarm, Rodrigo snatched the shackled form of Manuella, and struck with her through the terrified crowd. None opposed, and he won the steps of the portico.

"Mueran los Jesuitas!" vociferated the advancing rabble.

"Death to them all!" shouted a ring-leader, as he raised his weapon over Rodrigo's head. It grazed his arm, and struck the neck of Manuella. Staggering from the blow, yet forced on by his brother Jesuits, Rodrigo was borne into the temple; the heavy porch closed. Amongst those who had forced their way into the Collegio, was he who aimed the blow at Rodrigo—it was Marco Diaz. It was he who had led the exasperated rabble against the Jesuits; from the lips of the condemned Manuella he had heard the revelation of the priest's infamy, and rushing

on, blinded by fury and despair, he had dealt that fearful blow which was fated to destroy the guiltless one. He stood for a moment transfixed with horror, but suddenly sank to the ground. A wounded Jesuit, who recognised the arm that had smote him, had approached behind, and a poniard was sheathed to the hilt in the executioner's neck. Marco Diaz expired.

Whilst the Jesuits were fortifying themselves for defence within, hoping that the strong doors of the temple would hold out until the soldiery arrived in sufficient numbers to disperse the multitude, a fearful scene was passing without. Far from repressing the violence of the mob, the milicia urbana made common cause with the besiegers; and the regular military, if they did not co-operate with these, were at least passive witnesses of the revolutionary excess. A fearful exhibition of the murdered bodies of monks strewed the pavement. Brutality and ferocity

led the work of slaughter, and the victims were literally hewn to pieces. Such, indeed, if the truth must be told, was the infatuation of every class for revenge on the detested churchmen, that even scions of Castilian grandees were confounded with that mob of butchers, whom they emulated in their excesses.

But more volumes than those appropriated to this relation would not suffice for a full detail of the horrid events of the 17th of July. We shall not attempt to follow the blood-thirsty multitude, in its career of slaughter beyond those incidents immediately connected with our story; nor shall we strive to picture the massacre at the churches of La Merced and Santo Tomaso; much less that at San Francisco, where the fury of homicide was carried to its highest pitch. Appalling sights met the passenger's eye in every part of the city—combining the ravages of the assassin's knife with those of the blasting

breath of cholera; and carts abounded laden with the dead, and bearing their livid burthens over the slaughtered priesthood in their way.

CHAPTER XV.

"..... Hark!
..... No; all is hush'd, and still as death. 'Tis dreadful.
How rev'rend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch, and pond'rous roof,
By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,
Looking tranquillity. It strikes an awe
And terror on my aching sight: the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chilness to my trembling heart."

CONGREVE.

Sacrilegious Invasion—The Massacre—Retribution—A recovered Treasure.

THE dismay of the Jesuits augmented as they looked in vain for aid from the municipal authorities. On the other hand, the crowd at

the gates was continually increasing; — their loud cries proclaiming their reinforcements to the besieged monks. Of fearful import were the threats which saluted them. "Mueran todos los frailes!"—"Death to every priest!" rang in their ears, during the repeated attempts to force the gates. Still, however, those massive barriers resisted the assault.

Despair now took possession of the priests. They hastily removed their valuables from the altars, and secreted the more precious vases. One alone was insensible to the danger.

A group might be observed at the foot of the high altar: it consisted of three persons: one, a young girl in the coarse yellow wrapper, with a large cross inlaid in front—the degrading habit of the violator of law. She lay extended on the marble, her head resting upon the knee of another female. A Jesuit knelt beside them: of livid white was his countenance, contrasting fearfully with his sable hood. The hand of

Alice Downie was pressed upon Manuella's neck, to stanch the blood flowing from the wound she had received at the portico. The pressure had recalled the sufferer's fleeting existence, and her half-closed eyes assumed, in that moment, a look of inexpressible sweetness. She had heard the hurried relation of her kindred to Rodrigo, and beheld in her former persecutor the author of her being.

Some souls are imprisoned on earth for a whole life of trial—as if their peace were only to be purchased by enduring every shock which our frail bodily tenement can withstand,—souls, whose divine energy rises superior to the sufferings of the flesh. Such was the Christian spirit shrouded within the mortal frame of Manuella. It had been roused from that hallowed composure for which resignation had prepared it; it was awakened to painful and conflicting emotions during the disclosure of Alice; but the maiden's mind, vigorous, just, and pure, soon

resumed its wonted self-command and habitual serenity. Raising her head with difficulty, she interrupted, though with feeble and expiring voice, the fervent invocation of the Jesuit.

"Not for me thy prayer, Rodrigo:—be it for thyself! O now I wish for life to pray for thee! But I am losing strength. I do not know—yet what I feel is, methinks, like the weakness of the dying. Ah, yes!—I have not long to live! Rodrigo!—Father! Thou hast often told me, the prayer of the expiring is heard in heaven—mine is for thee!"

Her faltering voice could no longer be heard. Louder, meanwhile, grew the tumult without: the doors shook with violence,—the terrified Jesuits fled to the vestibule. Rodrigo alone remained—his head bowed down over his bleeding child.

The gates of the temple were heard to creek and rattle on their strained hinges. The iron frame-work at length shook, and a loud crash

followed. The sacrilegious murderers now poured in like an overwhelming torrent. Nobles and plebeians, men and women, armed with pikes, bludgeons, daggers, and muskets, pressed on to the work of death. Silence and solitude reigned within the temple as they entered.

"To the cloisters!" shouted the sanguinary mob—"Muerte!"

Then was heard from the interior of the building the loud cries of revenge—the groans of the dying—the screams of agony and rage—the last moans of departing souls. These passed away. The assassins appeared again in the chancel: their work was not yet finished. Like beasts of prey, who have once tasted human blood, they thirsted still the more.

"Another lives!" exclaimed a ferocious-looking manolla, who had just wiped from her navaja, with the folds of her dress, the blood it had drank; and, followed by the rest, she sprang towards Rodrigo. The Jesuit arose at

the sound ; — his face, which had leaned on the neck of his child, was smeared with the blood from her wound. The manolla drew back aghast, awed by the spectral apparition before her.

" He is only half slain," said one.

" Had he fifty lives, I would take them all," vociferated another.

These threats had an effect almost miraculous upon Manuella. With, as it would seem, superhuman effort, she sprang from the ground, and rushed in front of her father. Her manner— her prison dress, dyed with blood—struck the leaders of the mob with momentary hesitation. They speedily threw it aside.

" Mata el perro—muera el Jesuita !"

The poor girl was at once thrust away, and fell senseless upon the marble. In an instant, the knives of the assailants were buried in the body of the priest; and, whilst a limb quivered, they were not withdrawn. The miscreants,

seeing now no longer any living objects of their hatred in the college, took the direction of the church of Santo Tomaso, there to wreak yet further their unsated vengeance. The temple was left silent and abandoned; for its former inmates breathed no more.

Alice Downie, as from a dream, slowly recovered her recollection. She found herself extended by the side of Manuella. The body of Rodrigo lay a few paces off, but so mutilated and disfigured that she recognised him not. A sudden thought aroused her. In the deserted and violated temple, Manuella's life was no longer protected—she therefore snatched her from the ground. Some other asylum must be sought, and Alice fled into the street, bearing the insensible victim in her arms.

She proceeded without interruption. The thoroughfares were deserted, — at least, the dying and the dead alone were there. At first, she thought of taking refuge in the church of

San Francisco; but, approaching that spot, she descried the same multitude which had so fearfully visited the College of Jesuits. They had already commenced the massacre of the Franciscan monks. The exasperated mob who had taken possession were casting the symbols of the altars, the images of saints, and the holy relics, through the windows, into the streets: plunder, destruction, and death, in short, were busy. Alice took a different direction.

The reign of terror had now fairly set in: the peaceable and religious-minded citizens were dismayed. In every dwelling consternation prevailed; but more especially in the various convents. In the church of the "Carmen," where the usual attack was made, the means of defence were more effectual. Its massive doors resisted all the efforts of the besiegers.—The nunneries were alike in dismay. At that of the Commendadoras de Santiago, the cholera had made its appearance, and carried off many victims.

The bodies of the deceased nuns were hastily deposited in the chancel, to be removed at a more fitting opportunity. Amid this scene of desolation, the Superiora alone was insensible to fear or sorrow. She had drained the cup of bitterness, and its dregs had poisoned her brain,—memory and grief vanished together. But that dignity which was natural to Belen forsook not her person,—the maniac still wore the same commanding air. Mute and calm, she paraded the vast establishment, as if in search of some lost treasure: the past was no more remembered; and the present held no sympathy with her spirit. That which she sought was to others a mystery—to herself a treasure beyond all price,—yet inexpressible—not to be uttered.

At this crisis, the heavy curtain before the porch of the temple was pushed aside, and Alice appeared, partly supporting, partly dragging on the ground the form of Manuella. Fainting,

almost breathless, she sank with her burthen on the floor of the chancel. Near them lay the bodies of two of the sisterhood, whom the cholera had seized. The barrier between the precincts of the cloister and the public temple, in this hour of calamity, was not closed : it was no longer a bulwark that separated the sisters from the denizens of the world. The Superiora stood before that iron screen of the convent, the gate of which had been thrown open in order to deposit the departed in the nave. Another body was now borne past her — warm, yet dead. Belen followed mechanically: there was something in the surrounding display of dissolution that was in unison with her state of feeling. Her features were composed ; her step slow, but firm. She paused before the bodies of her late companions, but evinced no feeling of surprise— no change of demeanour. She moved forward, her eye fixed on vacancy. Something obstructed her path. The dress—the blood upon

her neck—the youthful beauty, even in death—one eager, rapid, glance sufficed: she knelt down beside that apparition of her bleeding child—her hands were joined in prayer. That form, apparently lifeless, was the realization of her fancy. She had seen Manuella expire on the scaffold. She now saw her corpse at her feet. Now had she found her treasure—her beautiful, her innocent child.

"Welcome, my lost—my lovely one!" said Belen, in an even and solemn tone, as if she were addressing an invisible spirit. "Who now will dare to separate us? Thy mother's tomb is wide enough — sweetly shall we repose—united—for ever . . . . ."

Manuella, on whose features her mother's gaze was immoveably fixed, now faintly opened her eyes. Belen's form shook, — her teeth chattered: the girl moved, — and now the Superiora's screams drew the inmates of the convent around her. Alice Downie, who had

fainted, was recalled to consciousness: she collected her thoughts.

"Water—water!" cried she. "Bathe her temples—stanch her wound—the child lives!"

Some of the sisterhood obeyed. They administered restoratives to the bleeding victim, who appeared slowly to recover. Meantime, an extraordinary change appeared in the Superiora: a flood of tears burst from her fevered eyes. The insanity of Belen had passed away. Her returning reason was the short-lived sunshine of the soul which a Supreme Being sometimes grants to the afflicted heart ere it break;—it was a light given to conduct her spirit to its eternal home. Alice had, by this time, in some degree, recovered her energies; and, as Belen locked in her arms her dying offspring, she hastily explained events.

"Hija de mis entrañas!—My restored—my beautiful child!" said the Superiora, glancing enraptured through her tears, while her hand

was passed and repassed over Manuella's body. She parted the hair from her face.

"She shall live!—See! the blood returns to her cheek—her lips!" and she leant down her own to receive her daughter's breath. "O! this is kind of Heaven, to restore thee—thee! whom I have wept as slaughtered for my sin! We shall live together;—laugh—weep—pray—feast together ..... See, she breathes more freely,—she will speak anon—her lips move even now!" and the nun, wild with joy, hung over her reviving child.

CHAPTER XVI.

" Her dying patience glimmers in thy face!
She lives again! She looks upon me now!
There's magic in't."

Ion.

Wherein Events draw to a Close—Satisfactory Details for the Reader—Atonement and Forgiveness.

The Duke de Gor, Governor of Madrid, issued a proclamation which had not the effect for which it was intended—namely, that of calming the popular excitement; and it is remarkable that an individual of his distinguished class should have entertained the vulgar suspicion,

that the waters had been poisoned by the priests, who dreaded the opening of the Cortes, being well aware that the earliest matter of their deliberation would be the annulling of many ecclesiastical privileges. The news of Don Carlos' return to Spain still more exasperated the exaltados; and the report of *nux vomica* being mixed with the waters was designedly seized upon as a plea for exterminating the detested monks.

Amongst the victims were numbered men who deserved better of their country. Of the Jesuits, Don Juan Artigas, professor of philosophy, Father Elola, Father Castro Fermandez, fell; Father Saun had his head literally hammered to pieces. The murderers only remembered the guilty, and that, from the same collegiate church of San Isidro of Madrid, of late years, the missionary, Don Balthasar Calbo, was the instigator of atrocious murders in Valencia, for which he suffered on the scaffold.

Amidst those scenes of bloodshed, an instance of extraordinary respect for the symbols of the catholic worship was evinced. A priest, in full canonicals, bearing the hostie, and attended by others aiding in the ceremony, passed through the mob of murderers unmolested, whilst his brethren, unprotected by the pomp and ceremony of outward worship, were hewn in pieces. In the Toledo street, one of the horse militia pursued a Jesuit, and, at one blow, cleft his head to the chine, unhorsing himself by the violence of the stroke.

Many other excesses were committed, and one of a nature that cannot be detailed in these pages. Montreil was the victim. Horribly mutilated, and bleeding to death, he was attended by De Clifford, an escrivano, and other witnesses. The confessions he made in his last moments effected the liberation of Don Ruy de Valmarino from prison; and, in conse-

quence of these and other disclosures, an order was immediately issued for the arrest of Alice Downie. This latter circumstance took place on the day of the massacre of the monks; but Alice was nowhere to be found. On forcing open her apartment in the Calle Mayor, however, some important papers were discovered; one of them, of a recent date, addressed to Montreil, containing the following words:—

"Should sudden death or imprisonment hereafter prevent my intended disclosure of the following facts, let me here put on record, and solemnly declare, for the information of the Chevalier Montreil, that the oracle which he and Colonel Mac Maw consulted, in the person of Xavier Traluchio, was Alice Downie, alias Alice de Clifford, the reputed mother of Herbert de Clifford, whose reputed father was Lieut. De Clifford, killed at the sortie of Bayonne. The said Herbert is, however, in reality, the

stolen offspring of Rose Campbell, who died in child-birth;—the real father, the Chevalier need not be told."

Herbert read the passage to the dying Chevalier. The excruciating pain of Montreil was, for a moment, forgotten, and his mind rendered the seat of rapid thoughts and painful recollections, whilst his breast harboured surprise, remorse, anguish, and contrition. His fading eye, fixed on Herbert, now easily traced the lineaments of his departed, but never-to-be-forgotten victim; and his incoherent words betrayed at once past events, and the hopeless agony of his heart.

"Thou hast often recalled her to my mind until I have almost hated thee: thy voice—those features of thy mother—have haunted me. Why could I not unravel the mystery? Accursed through remorse for her,—accursed in the sight of thee, Herbert! Nay, thou shalt not for-

give;—such forgiveness would but still further torture and humble me."

Montreil sank into a lethargy. When he revived, death was near at hand.

"She is spotless, Herbert,—thine own Merced,—pure as when thou first looked upon her! She is revenged, too,—and by my death! Win her, my son, she is worthy of thee; and teach her to forgive me. *Thou* never canst,—I was thy mother's destroyer!

"Attend to me! Thy mother's parents pardoned when too late: that pardon lives for thee! Seek them out. Friends and fortune may yet be thy portion." The death-rattle was heard in Montreil's throat. He struggled for some time, till, becoming fainter and fainter, the convulsions at length ceased, and his spirit fled.

When returns were made, a few days after, of the more distinguished victims of the cholera, the name of the Englishman Montreil was in-

cluded. But amid those excesses of brutality and assassination which rendered this epoch one of dire celebrity, there was a rumour afloat of a horrid crime having been committed ; and the name of Montreil was whispered as that of the victim. But the particulars were not known till a later period, when the authorities were made acquainted, by post, from one of the rebellious provinces, with the name of the assassin. The avenger of a sister's honour, in fact, gloried in the deed, and fearlessly affixed his name to the document that announced the murder of the ravisher Montreil, and denounced the Chevalier's unknown pander, Alice Downie:—that name was the Carlist's, Jayme de Valmarino, now beyond the pale of the law of Isabel Segunda.

Of a different tenour was the communication addressed by the same correspondent to a being now of some interest to the reader—the daughter of Pepe Manzanos.

"A trusty messenger will remit this letter into the hands of my beloved wife, of whose convalescence I have received intelligence,—for whilst the capital is supplied from a partial press with the inventions of party, upon the state of affairs with Don Carlos, we, his adherents, are furnished with advice, which may be faithfully relied upon, from the heart of the dominions of Isabel.

"Of the events at Madrid since my departure I have had due notice. Of my mother's death, and the numerous victims to the pestilence, (acquaintance, friends, and relatives,) I have been also informed. But a solace came with these sad tidings to relieve my heart. Duly acquainted with the progress of your malady, I am at length apprised that the crisis of danger is past.

"Looking back upon the incidents which have marked my unprincipled life, one stagger-

ing page of my story presents to me the deformity of my mind in all its baseness. Would that my crimes had crushed me alone, and left thee unscathed. Heaven sends misfortunes for some wise end; the bolt that fells the destroyer and his victim is alike for some good purpose. A change has come over my inward spirit, and restoration to my own esteem can be attained only by a life of devoted atonement to thee, my beloved wife. The unforgiving world is aloof from us. Man, clothed in his rags of righteousness, struts before his Maker, and, secure in comparison, builds his stepping-stone to Heaven upon the errors of fellow-mortals. But He who is alone capable of judging our works by their merits, will, in his own good time, requite the virtuous according to their trials, and visit the iniquitous with leniency proportioned to their temptations."

. . . . . .

This letter was accompanied by one for Don

Pepe Manzanos, the burthen of which was to urge him to qui t the capital with his child and seek a more secure haven from the raging pestilence. Don Jayme's agent was instructed to advise them to visit the French side of the Pyrenees, and there await the result of that contest upon which his future fortunes depended, when, whatever the event, if life were spared him, he should join them; and the person entrusted with these communications was directed to make known to him their decision. The following letter was expedited:—

"Paquita to Jayme.

"As from a dream, in which my thoughts have wandered through alternate scenes of distress and felicity, I awaken, and your letter at length has come to establish my hopes in the blessed reality. Enfeebled in mind and body, still bewildered, I scarcely can bring myself to believe that the hour of impending death was

that of my bridal ceremony. When composed, and, as I fancied, sinking fast into a welcome grave, my soul yearning upon the threshold of the tomb for release from shame and despair, the voice that once sank upon my confiding heart with the potency of a master-spirit that chained me to his will, recalled me to a momentary gleam of life. My fading sight, as I listened to the sounds, again revealed the vision of that ministering angel who sealed my peace with Heaven and blest our earthly vows.

"The fancied dream has past, and in its stead, reality all bright comes soothing to my bosom: —thou art mine,—for ever, mine.

"The days allotted me in this life can never compass all the love I have to bestow, and my duties of wife shall commence with the fond task of forgiveness. So much need have we of mercy from the Judge of all, that bold is the mortal who withholds from an erring brother remission of offences.

"Your desire that I should leave Madrid shall be complied with, as soon as my yet feeble frame will admit of the fatigue. The virulence of the cholera has partially abated. I have ascertained that your venerable father is fast recovering the energies of his mind, so rudely shocked by late events, and that he and your sister propose quitting the capital.

"A singular incident connected with the demise of a lady of fashion and wealth, has revealed circumstances of deep import to us both. The Countess Miraposa, in her last moments, and after the departure of her confessor, with an almost supernatural effort, summoned an old and faithful individual of her household, with other attendants, to witness to her last will. In those hurried moments she disclaimed her Jesuit confessor's appropriation of her property, bequeathing it to one whom she averred had been the victim of an insidious calumny, and avowing herself to have been the authoress of

that fatal anonymous letter, which cruelly represented to my dear confiding father, as a crime, the conduct of his devoted but erring child. She named me the heiress of her wealth.

"The decision of my excellent parent on this occasion has been such as you might have anticipated,—a proud rejection of the proffered atonement to injured honour; and I still come to my beloved husband, the portionless, but devoted

"PAQUITA."

CHAPTER XVII.

"What! old acquaintance! could not all this flesh
Keep in a little life?"—SHAKSPEARE.

"Plures crapula, quam gladius."

Ghost and no Ghost—Confessions of import to the Story—A fatal Vision.

AMONGST the sufferers from cholera were included Doña Mariquita de Valmarino and the Superiora of the Commendadoras de Santiago. On the same bier were borne to their long home the bodies of Belen and Manuella.

It was when the last hurried rites were performed over their remains, that a hideous and macerated-looking wretch, in woman's garb, crouching at the foot of the grave, first drew the attention of the sexton; but the incessant labours which fell to the share of the latter, owing to the raging mortality in the metropolis, made him reckless of idle inquiry, and for some hours the woman was suffered to remain unmolested. At first his passing supposition was, that she was afflicted with the epidemic, and had, with the strength of despair, dragged herself thither to die. But the morrow came, and statue-like did the female remain there, still in the same prostrate attitude. Concluding that she had stiffened in death, the sturdy gaoler of the prison-house of the grave seized her frame, to cast it into that pit which had been opened for the harvest of the contagion; but the female sprang to her feet, and the official drew back. Hideous as were those ghastly burthens which

his accustomed craft was wont to shroud for ever, the living anatomy that now fixed upon him her wild and glaring eyes, struck him with a fear unknown before, and he recoiled speechless and aghast.

The sexton, whose avocation "custom had made in him a property of easiness," had not, however, alienated his belief from the accredited superstitions of his country. Ingeniously entwined with a mystical system of religion, witchcraft in Spain profanes the true reading of sacred revelations; and, coupling therewith the most sacred points of Romish belief, the natives of the Iberian peninsula ascribe the powers of magic to such females as are born at that moment when a certain mass is celebrated, during Passion Week, at the altar of the blessed Virgin. Sad was the fate, in olden time, during the imperial sway of the Holy Inquisition, of the luckless wretch discovered to have been born at such a critical instant. Put to the test,

red-hot bars were passed over her body; her nails were torn out by the roots with pincers; she was made to walk on live coals, and to lie on a bed of needles. If she survived this ordeal, — if, duly magnetized, she laughed to scorn the inflicted trials,—she was then suffered to go forth a privileged saludadora. Then were her powers unlimited; her very breath was at will destructive; and man, brute, and vegetation, alike withered under its baneful influence.

The whole category of witches, hobgoblins, and devils, that had ever disquieted the volcanic fancies or meridional imagination of a Spaniard, passed in panoramic review before the sexton's memory, and he at once pronounced the dishevelled and haggard being before him a confirmed saludadora. Solving, satisfactorily to his mind, the mystery of the reigning calamity, he ascribed the visitation of cholera to her appearance, and her chosen abode in the

cemetery to her avidity for the spoils of human flesh.

The grave-digger having come to this conclusion, his next was to effect an escape. His robust frame, however, underwent a severe shock, when it occurred to him that the supernatural agency of witchcraft might detect his insidious design of denouncing the sorceress to the authorities. The pestilence itself suggested not half that terror to his mind which the presence of the dreaded saludadora created; but when, with staid and stealthy step, he had gained the gate of the cemetery, and a turn had concealed him from her view,—then, as if the pinions of Mercury were appendages to his heels, he skimmed the ground in quest of official aid.

Encountering a troop of alguazils, who were in search of some malefactor, the sexton related his story, and, either in consequence of their credulity or curiosity, obtained escort back to the burial-ground; but, if his fears subsided,

his astonishment augmented, when the officials pounced upon the sorceress as the very prey they were in quest of, she being, indeed, no other than Alice Downie. Unable, from exhaustion and despair, to resist, she was placed upon a litter, which opportunely at that moment had discharged its lifeless burthen in the cemetery, and was borne away to the carcel.

Of the numerous charges brought against Alice, in consequence of the confessions of Montreil, whose denunciations formed a key to the revelation of her infamous career, none gave rise to such execration as that of her being one of the accomplices in the nefarious plot to destroy the daughter of Ruy de Valmarino.

We will not revert to those punishments which, in former times, and even within that of the present generation, were publicly inflicted for similar offences in Spain. One of the few steps

towards civilization in that country has been the judiciously removing from public gaze gratuitous exhibitions of the depravity of human nature. It is enough that the profligate should know of the existence of gross iniquities. Repeatedly witnessing examples of crime serves to indurate the heart, which is at first inspired thereby with horror. And wherefore drag vice from its haunts to appal the innocent, or render it familiar to the gaze of the uncontaminated?

To the honour of the Spanish metropolis, a greater number of hospitals for the afflicted and destitute exist there than, perhaps, in any other city, with proportion to its population. These benevolent institutions are not confined solely to the disabled and indigent, but provide for the erring children of mortality in a multiplicity of ways, with due reference to the crimes committed. Females have been peculiarly cared for in the arrangement of these establishments—

from the house of refuge for the penitent, to that for the detention of the obdurate culprit amenable to justice.

Of the latter order is the house of correction, denominated the galera, and to this asylum was Alice Downie committed for the remainder of a life to be passed in tears and lamentations for the loss of the only being she had ever loved.

On learning the arrest of Alice, many persons in Madrid, who were secretly of the faction, prudently decamped. In the course of those confessions which were now easily extorted from her, an unknown range of conspiracy was brought to light. The main-spring to her exertion snatched away for ever, with Manuella vanished all regard for life itself—and the scaffold was a merciful prospect viewed as the termination of that existence which had now become a burthen. Fearlessly did she reveal the story of her crimes.

Confronted, for the ends of justice, with

Herbert de Clifford in her disclosures concerning Montreil, a new light was thrown upon the object of the Chevalier's mission to Madrid.

During his desultory career, those profligate habits which he had contracted in dissipated youth needed new resources when his patrimony was exhausted, and he sold himself to the secret service of potentates. By the help of abilities of no ordinary kind, he gained some ascendancy in their confidence with regard to those private, but odious transactions, which some illustrious personages consider necessary to perform, though they profess to disown them. How far he was worthy of trust may be deduced from the circumstance that, in a private escritoire, papers were found, establishing proof that he was, at once, the secret agent for two courts, and in the employment of ministers diametrically opposed in political principles,—one being servant to a party of the Quadruple—the other to a party of the Holy Alliance.

To the range of his pursuits no certain bounds, from the evidence adduced, could be affixed—except that, in addition to the above, he was a stock-jobber, and engaged in propagating many of those lies which were the making or undoing of his correspondents.

But the disclosures most important to the reader were those which confirmed the documents found in her dwelling in the Calle Mayor, and Alice willingly lent herself to every detail which could possibly interest Herbert de Clifford. In this instance, she fondly recurred to that day when he devoted himself for the preservation of Manuella. She remembered, too, that her adopted child had conceived an earnest regard for her preserver, the legitimate origin of which was deep-felt gratitude. This circumstance awakened in Alice's behalf a disposition to befriend De Clifford to the utmost of her ability. Her unconditional and gratuitous avowal of crimes with which she was not

charged, gave a stamp of sincerity to abstract declarations, which contributed to re-establish the reputation of Herbert.

Moreover, collecting every incident which could now establish his identity with his mother's relations, she committed to paper a succinct statement of evidences, which she entrusted to Herbert, with directions to discover such persons as were her accomplices when he was kidnapped as an infant.

"They will receive thee," added Alice, with unfeigned delight. "A burthen is on the consciences of thy ill-fated mother's parents, the removal of which they will purchase through largesses and fondness for thee. They deserted thy luckless parent as the world did. They assumed the attributes of justice:—they cast away from their hearts their own offspring, and harshly judging the errors of passions inherited from themselves, assumed the prerogatives even of divinity, in order to condemn the weak-

ness of a mortal, forgetting that infusion of mercy which softens the fall of Heaven's avenging rod upon the children of sin. Heart-broken, the victim died;—and now who shall appear between them and their God to mitigate *their* faults—what clemency have they shewn toward fellow-sinners, or how shall they say, at the judgment day—

> 'The mercy I to others shew,
> That mercy shew to me.'

"When, too late, every research was made to discover the offspring of their discarded child, vain was the effort: another destiny awaited thee; and when I heard of their pursuit, I was too much compromised to disclose the secret. But events more romantic than the powers of fiction could have fabricated have, in reality, befallen mortals; and often, too, 'le vrai n'est pas toujours vraisemblable.'"

Herbert listened with rapt attention and in-

tense feeling to these disclosures, and his amazement was extreme to hear, from lips which had avowed utter degradation of mind, sentiments exhibiting a degree of judgment far less perverted than her heart. He was unable to reconcile this seeming disparity.

But the wretched being doomed for her short remainder of life to confinement within the narrow limits of a prison-house, now surveyed the nullity of her existence, and saw that, to its monotony, the only prospective change was death.

Bereavement of those beings we cherish brings us home to ourselves. The most irreverent must, when a kinsman's spirit is snatched away, as they recal the departed friend, revert to that bourne from which no traveller returns; whilst, under the awful visitation which deprives us for ever of the solace of the nearest ties,—when the hand of death has passed over the lineaments of

youth and beauty, loveliness and innocence,—to such dispensation of Heaven may not the regeneration of many a human heart be attributed, brought to commune with eternity in its yearnings towards the departed!

Alice Downie existed now for regrets alone. That spotless being who had formed the object of her only affection, lived yet within her mind. One so lovely and so pure she could not but believe had been marked for Heaven; and, brought to admit this as the dearest solace to her breast, to that goal she now turned her thoughts,—and we will hope, though we may not confidently add,—in prayer for the redemption of her own soul.

Ere we take our farewell of the gentle reader, we have also to record the death of our bottle-companion, the valiant Coronello Mac Maw. And here, in some measure, the prophecy of the false astrologer, Don Xavier Traluchio, came to

pass. The Colonel had dined, as usual, with Montreil on the day preceding that of the massacre of the Jesuits, prudently resolving to abstain from such viands as were reputed to be inducive of cholera. But "Man proposes, and God disposes:"—a dish of that savoury species of river lobster, "Gangrejos," temptingly spreading its blushing honours before the enraptured eyes of our gastronomic hero, the cholera and its ravages were entirely forgotten!

That night the dreams of MacMaw were brightened by a rosy halo in the perspective. Nigher and nigher it came,—the garland was of a bright scarlet. By degrees the flowers of the circle changed to living *Gangrejos*, linked to each other by their claws. Now they fastened round his abdomen—their excruciating gripe entered his vitals—with a convulsive grasp MacMaw seized the tightened girdle—but too late. The scarlet bandage, in his last expiring struggle,

assumed, to his inward vision, the appearance of the long-expected sash, and the spirit of a general was emancipated from the mortal remains of MacMaw—Coronel in the heroic army of Isabel Segunda.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Prospero. "If I have too austerely punished you,
Your compensation makes amends; for I
Have given you here a thread of mine own life,
Or that for which I live; . . . . .
. . . . . all thy vexations
Were but my trials of thy love, and thou
Hast strangely stood the test: here, afore Heaven,
I ratify this my rich gift."

THE TEMPEST.

Liberation and Resignation — Hard Laws and Merciful Amendment.

WHEN Don Ruy de Valmarino was restored to liberty, an extraordinary change had taken place in his appearance. The desolating events of a few weeks, the death of Juanita, his incar-

ceration, the demise of his lady, and, not least, that fearful moment of suspense when his unprotected child was in the power of a villain and he a helpless captive,—all had tended to alter his lofty bearing, and he came forth taciturn and subdued. Yet, full of the same deep feeling as formerly, his meeting with his daughter Merced was truly affecting. Both were for a considerable time unable to articulate a word; and hours passed whilst the hidalgo ever and anon turned again to fold his child in his arms, as if to reassure himself that one blessing yet remained to him.

The city was still in commotion, as on the site of recent conflagration danger was still apprehended, and the military paraded the streets. The cholera continued its ravages. The extermination of the Jesuits was not found to be a remedy for the evil, and scenes of appalling misery presented themselves. The bills of mortality still continued to present formidable lists.

In vain did the citizens seek to escape the fangs of the destroyer; every road to the provinces was thronged with fugitives, whilst a strict blockade was kept up at those places in the environs which were supposed to be yet uncontaminated, and many were forced, in despair, to retrace their steps, and brave the public calamity.

Herbert de Clifford in the midst of these events had to bear up against trials of a domestic nature. The death of Montreil, and the revelations of Alice Downie, were circumstances of awful moment in his career, and accompanied with a powerful shock to his feelings. The miseries of mortals may be rated by comparison; and Providence, in its allotment of the burthens of ill, more equally distributes the cares of this life than man under affliction is disposed to admit. The concurrence of private misfortune with public calamity tended to diminish the importance of the latter; and

to a degree of indifference for himself, added to a robust constitution, unimpaired by the follies of youth, may be attributed Herbert's escape from contagion. But not thus unconcerned was de Clifford for the fate of that being, whom his soul revered as one of a superior order. Almost hourly did he wait at the house of Ruy de Valmarino to ascertain the fate of its inmates. Their affliction, their deep distress, forbade him to intrude his presence, yet kind wishes accompanied every answer to his inquiries.

After a lapse of some days, the hidalgo gave orders that Herbert should be admitted; and when the venerable Castilian met the preserver of his child,—prepared, as he fancied he was, to receive him with dignity,—strength forsook him, and, unable to welcome De Clifford in words, he bowed his head in mute sorrow upon the young Englishman's shoulder.

Recovering at length his self-possession, he pressed Herbert's hand, as, with a face upon which he endeavoured to force a smile, he thus addressed him :—

" The wreck I am, De Clifford, bears witness to the ordeal I have passed. Yet will I not repine. Alas ! we are often prone to accuse fate of those afflictions we have brought upon ourselves, whilst we too readily forget the clemency vouchsafed under our severest trials. Have I not one treasure remaining to be grateful for ? and, under Providence, to whom am I indebted for this blessing ?—to thee, De Clifford !

" Nor will my child ever forget her preserver. Yet let it not afflict thee : these sad events have cast a gloom upon her spirits, and time alone can soothe her youthful, but grief-stricken heart. She cannot, she must not, now behold thee, nor for a long season. Nay, friend, be firm—thy hand trembles—thou art pale !

"Hear me, Sir!" and the hidalgo, assuming a stern demeanour, with intent to recal his visitor to his wonted composure, continued:—"I have not long to live; this tendril—this poor child . . . . . De Clifford—oh, this weakness—well, we'll see—but not yet. My daughter—thou savedst her, and thou wouldst have her thanks from her own lips? 'Tis just; but hear me. Since I have been liberated, each live-long day has passed between us communing more in thought than words. I saw through her deep blush a wounded spirit; it was her soul that had, in apprehension, been cast from its attitude of purity. Be it my task, the business of this worn-out life, to heal the wound. I will be brief. Were she to see thee now, her cheek would redden — humbled that she had ever needed other than her father's means to shield her virtue."

Herbert seemed to recover, as his inmost

thought appreciated the delicacy of the Castilian. Don Ruy now rose from his seat to terminate an interview which he was unable to prolong, but entreated his friend to renew his visit.

Some days elapsed, during which De Clifford continued to make the accustomed inquiries. At length he was one morning admitted to the hidalgo's apartment, and found him comparatively calm; whilst an injunction which Don Ruy gave to his servants not to interrupt him, inspired Herbert with a just reason to expect that this interview would prove portentous to his future happiness.

"The mortality is on the decrease," said the father of Merced, "and the road to France is now open: we are about to proceed thither, in search of that quiet which is banished from my native land. Little will remain behind for my regrets, save one being—my friend De Clifford. This parting will be painful to us both. I

caused you to expect an interview with my child: prudence—her peace of mind—my own—forbid it."

De Clifford awaited, in breathless suspense, the conclusion of the hidalgo's speech; but the banishment from the presence of his child was so unconditionally pronounced, that, roused by despair, he seized the arm of Don Ruy, as he interrupted him.

"Forbid! peace of mind! Mark me, Señor Don Ruy. I have seemed patient, whilst a war was here, which love, long kindled for your daughter, has waged against a stubborn deference to your injunctions. With a heart that never loved but one, I have borne your stern denial to approach her, and would yet disarm, by long endurance, your scruples; but this eternal proscription is more than I can or will submit to. Señor, I insist . . . . ."

"Herbert de Clifford," said the hidalgo, with

austerity, "the generosity and gallantry you have evinced under the test of extraordinary occurrences, formed to me a pledge that these noble qualities were inherent in your nature. Would you compel me to relinquish this opinion?"

The young Englishman, whose rising indignation an appeal to his generosity was sufficient to disarm, was now a prey to mental suffering, which overpowered his resolution.

"Listen!" pursued Don Ruy: "I have yet to name one condition, upon which an interview may take place—answer me! In life has never pledge escaped you, which may have bound you in honour to any one of that sex which your Creator ordained to look up to ours for protection? Be not amazed at my question, but answer me as you are a man. You hesitate, De Clifford. I will be frank with you. My daughter, Sir, owes you more than life, and her

young heart, open to gratitude, avows it. . . . . In short, her deliverer is young and brave, and if honourable . . . . . Rise, Sir," continued the hidalgo, as Herbert sank at his feet: "the hesitation which I just now noticed has explained to me that you were pre-engaged."

"Pre-engaged—yes—I was—I am—to that peerless mortal who owes to you her existence! Hidalgo, before the Omniscient Judge—before thee—I swear, that never by covert means have I sought to gain possession of your daughter's heart. But hear me. In the silent depths of my bosom, her image lives unrivalled and alone. Thou knowest, Don Ruy, that I stand in this wide world an isolated being: judge, then, the strength of my regard, my devotion, to your fair child!" . . . . .

"Enough!" interrupted the hidalgo. "I am satisfied with these protestations; for only as an affianced husband can my child receive her preserver."

Herbert de Clifford, in a transport of gratitude and joy, pressed the hand of the hidalgo to his heart; and Don Ruy left him absorbed in halcyon reflections, whilst he hastened to prepare Merced for the interview.

CHAPTER XIX.

" Know'st thou not yet, when Love invades the soul,
That all her faculties receive his chains?
That reason gives her sceptre to his hand,
Or only struggles, to be more enslaved?"

DR. JOHNSON.

The Departure—Suspicious Guardians of Public Safety—Holy Wars—Rencontre with the Carlists—A Capture.

DON RUY NEPOMUCENO DE VALMARINO, his daughter, and De Clifford, took their seats in the Diligence from Madrid, in company with two fellow-travellers, who, like themselves, appeared anxious to quit a scene of such devastation and

horror as the capital had, for some weeks, presented.

This diligence, which proceeds from Madrid to Saragossa, arrived, at the usual hour, at its place of destination, as early as an interdict had ceased on that road against the infected city.

Persons of all ranks in the peninsula give a preference to this mode of conveyance—where it is established—over all others. For several years past, the Company of the Metropolitan Diligences had enjoyed a tacit security on the roads leading to the capital; and although, during the latter years of Ferdinand's reign, banditti swarmed over the entire country, the company contrived to secure the safety of those travellers who patronized them, making, with admirable policy, handsome overtures to the head-brigands of the most formidable troops, whom they thus actually succeeded in retaining as their professed guardsmen; and consequently, over tracts which used to be rallying-points whereat

to waylay the traveller, the diligences now pass secure under the vigilance of the most noted freebooters of Spain!

Such being the case, the high prices of travelling by these conveyances are cheerfully subscribed to,—the road becomes regularly frequented,—the robber changes his calling to that of defender of the public safety,—whilst the trade of cut-throat insensibly falls into disuse.

Of elegant and convenient construction is this vehicle in Spain. It is drawn by a number of mules, guided by the whoops of the mayoral and zagal, and racing at full gallop often along the verge of a precipice: its appearance, therefore, though sometimes perilous, is frequently beautiful and animated. No reins are obeyed by these testy quadrupeds; but the voice of the master sways them in their headlong career; whilst, obedient to the quaint cognomen bestowed upon it, each mule pricks up its ear to the well-known sound of coronela, generala,

&c.; and the human voice controls the brute, insensible though it be to the lash and the thong.

Cold, calculating, and ungenerous, must the heart of that traveller be, who is insensible to the unostentatious and redeeming points of the Spaniard's character, or who has returned from the land of the Cid to deprecate her customs, her laws, or her children. That uniformity which fashion has established throughout the rest of the continent,—which outwardly assimilates the Briton and the Frenchman, the German and the Italian,—has levelled, at least to the traveller's eye, features which once varied and interested his steps. The polite marquis of Louis the Fourteenth's day would be now as great an anomaly as the old English country gentleman, 'Squire Western. May we not venture to add, that, with the "good olden time," more than its vices have sunk into disuse?—that, if the onerous "droits du Seigneur" have

passed away with the ancien regime, so has also the essence of that gallantry which stamped the courtier of those days for the example of the world? Shall we approve the Anglomania, which has transformed the Parisian beau into a Bond-street lounger, or the Gallic infection, which has softened the honest bluntness of the English 'squire, and transformed him into an exquisite *nonentity?*

With the exception of her principal cities, Spain is the same as she was a hundred years ago: her prominent vices and her antiquated customs have neither of them undergone much change. Her Moorish ancestry, spite of barbarian extermination and the blood-fires of autos-da-fé, smiles, through the vista of years, in the dark glances of Andalusian beauty.

If we view from the Sierra Morena some distant turret, frowning over the luxuriant vega, its base in the snow, its battlements in the clouds; the Moorish village and the mosque;

the slight and dark-eyed maja half veiled, and journeying on a Moorish-caparisoned mule, her cortejo prancing his Arabian steed, his gaily-coloured jacket reflecting, in its gilded tassel-work, the rays of Andalusia's mid-day sun, fancy has no need of labour in identifying the scene with eastern romance; the turban of the Moslem alone is gone.

Don Ruy de Valmarino had recognised, in the elderly gentleman and his youthful daughter, who were his travelling companions, former acquaintance. Although some years had passed since they had last met, he knew them for Pepe Manzanos and his child. The convening of the cortes had opened a prospect of the restoration of Pepe's property; but his primary object was, to remove his child as speedily as possible from the capital. Her feeble health, and the disease yet prevalent in the city, had banished him, in truth, for the present, from his country.

A few days were devoted by the travellers, on

their arrival in Saragossa, to recover the fatigue of the journey from Madrid. This city, the Cæsar Augusta of the ancients, immortalized by the Heroine of our day, had innumerable attractions for the party,—consisting, to the orthodox Catholic, of the site of the Temple of Nuestra Señora del Pilar,—and to De Clifford, of those proud ruins which attest the glorious defence of the citizens against the forces of Napoleon.

For a long period, ecclesiastical pages were sullied with a war waged for supremacy in Saragossa between the servants of the Cathedral and those of the Temple of Our Lady of the Pillar: the latter contending that the spot which was visited by the Queen of Heaven, when she appeared to Santiago, should take precedence in all questions of mundane superiority; and the former successfully enlisting in their defence the monarchs of Spain.

Merced, Paquita, her father, and Don Ruy, paid their reverence to the illustrious shrine of

her Divine Majesty, and kissed the pillar whereupon the foot of the Mother of the Redeemer is said to have alighted on her celestial mission to the holy apostle. Supremely happy in those peregrinations which bequeathed to his charge his adored Merced, Herbert marked, with reverence, her devotion to the faith of her fathers —unostentatious, but profound; and respected the dogmas for that pure and angelic votarist's sake. As for Don Ruy, a liaison appeared to be established between him and his interesting fellow-traveller, Paquita; and the old gentleman's pointed attentions to the fair Castilian were avowedly in retaliation of the apparent desertion of Merced, who, whatever the disposition of the forces at starting, was ever either in the rear or the van with De Clifford.

As for Don Pepe, his position was embarassing: his relative connexion with Don Ruy, through the marriage of his daughter, was irksome to him in the shape of a secret, whilst the nature

of the circumstances strictly imposed silence. Still the impression which Paquita had created in the mind of her father-in-law was, he intuitively felt, the precursor of family unity.

The morning fixed upon for their departure at length arrived. Their destination being similar, it was preconcerted that the journey should be performed together, and the united and happy party resumed their expedition.

As they approached the confines of Navarre, evidences became abundant of the terrors of civil war. Every hamlet was put in a state of defence, and the Queen's troops were strongly mustered at the towns on the way. Once the theatre of the feats of desperate highwaymen, a higher sanction was now, perhaps, the only distinction between the enormities of banditti and the excesses of belligerents. Nearer as they came to the frontier, more marked was the dread of a visitation from the Carlists; and many fears were expressed for our

travellers lest they should encounter Zumalacarregui himself.

Such, at least, was the notion entertained at the frontier town of Mallen, through which they passed ere they entered Navarre. But whatever their dread of Carlist or Christino, it was with some satisfaction they passed on from the heavy ruts of the roads of Arragon to that smooth and beautiful causeway which everywhere in Navarre denotes a more independent people.

On leaving the town of Caparroso, our party, whose ostensible destination was the French frontier, by way of Pampeluna, journeyed cheerfully on, unintimidated by threats of an encounter with the absolutists.

Paquita, indeed, far from entertaining any fear of such a meeting, secretly sighed for it:—"She should obtain some tidings of her partner in life; — nay, he himself might be near at hand,"—and, at the thought, she resolved, if

opportunity offered, to penetrate into the camp of Don Carlos, and abide with her husband throughout the campaign. She was recalled from these fancies by a sudden stoppage of the vehicle, the driver having been ordered to halt by a horseman who galloped up to him. The peculiar cap of the Navarrese, worn by the officers of Don Carlos, at once denoted his party; whilst his demand (supported by a well-furnished belt of artillery) to inspect the travellers' passports, was at once complied with. Satisfied with the inspection, the trooper clapped spurs to his horse, and disappeared.

Our travellers at length halted, at a solitary venta on the road side, for their mid-day repast; and the driver having unharnessed his mules, on a sudden the ventero entered the estancia, and gave alarm that a troop of horsemen, wearing the livery of the Carlists, was approaching at full speed; and, ere his inmates had time to reconnoitre, the troopers were dismounting at the gate.

The innkeeper, his people, and the muleteer, were first marched off, under the pretext, it was given out, of privately examining the travellers; but the real object was, to turn aside all suspicion of collusion—as was soon evinced by the appearance of Don Jayme, who now suddenly entered, and who had taken these precautions to avoid compromising his friends with the Christinos on their further way by any apparent knowledge of the parties.

Amazement transfixed the hidalgo and his daughter Merced, when, on the appearance of his son, the lovely and unaffected Paquita, wild with joy, sprang towards him, and buried her blushing cheek in his bosom. It checked for a moment Don Ruy's own paternal demonstration of affection; but, in turn, he soon folded his son in his arms, whilst Merced, with unfeigned delight, welcomed her brother.

A hurried and somewhat incoherent detail of events was all the parties had now time to enter into; and Don Ruy, already prepossessed

in behalf of his fair daughter-in-law, with a heart chastened and subdued by recent affliction, felt too grateful for the gleam of sunshine afforded by this unlooked-for rencontre with his absent son to cloud the cheerful present by unnecessary scruples and Castilian punctilio. Each in turn enjoyed his or her own peculiar share of happiness during this very brief interview. Considerations for their mutual safety rendered a speedy separation imperative. The countenances of all betrayed their varied emotions, except Paquita's, on which was depicted a calmness and determination of purpose that baffled the penetration of her anxious parent, who dreaded to see her sink under this new trial. But when Jayme turned to take farewell of her who was dearer to him than all other earthly ties, the mystery was speedily solved. She firmly declared her determination of sharing his fortunes. Remonstrances were useless, and the devoted girl was at length permitted to follow the dictates of her own heart, after

receiving the faithful assurances of the gentle Merced, that she would cheerfully perform the duties of a daughter to the deserted Pepe, who was, for a season, to become one of their circle.

Again our travellers resumed their route. Paquita, journeying with her husband to the fastnesses of the Carlists;—Don Ruy and his little cortège, to the more peaceful confines of France.

. . . . . .

With the personages of our drama, we take leave of the stage of their exploits. In our short, but tumultuous, career in the capital of Castile, our task has been confined to that of narrator. Would we could say that the pen of the novelist had conjured from the regions of Fancy alone those scenes of bloodshed and crime which consign this fearful epoch of Spanish story to ignominious immortality. But the index need but be pointed to the authentic records of the day to prove the reality of atrocities of which these pages only offer a fraction.

Yet, with all her faults, we turn reluctantly to take our last farewell of this land of beauty, of passion, and romance. The country of the Cid; of the magnanimous Alphonso the Great; of the Captain of Cordova; and of the immortal Cervantes; may well claim the tribute of respect.

Once witnessed, ever remembered are the features of this kingdom: — painful or pleasing, we never forget them. Extremes of character; devotion and fanaticism, valour and fool-hardiness, poverty and pride, are met with;—but still the Spaniard never sinks to the level of contempt. "Il y a des défauts aimables" is an axiom which may be verified in the Peninsula. Crime itself is less revolting there, even the highwayman being courteous to his victim. The personal bearing becoming to man should be studied in the Spaniard—he is an innate gentleman.

Portioned off with no ordinary beauty, whether in the Estremeña or the Andaluza, the Ara-

gonesa or Bizcayna, a peculiar grace fashions the Spanish woman for admiration. In her hand, like the wand of fate, the ever-present fan flutters with decrees more dreaded than those of the oracle of Dodona, whilst hope and despair wait on the accompanying glance from eyes wherein the god of love lies ambushed.

Her language, "which melts like kisses from a lady's mouth," was pronounced, by the Emperor Charles the Fifth, to be the mother-tongue of angels. Soft as the Italian, yet far more majestic, with its suavity and its beautiful images it is poetry itself. The Spanish language should become the universal idiom,— "elle enfante l'harmonie."

CONCLUSION.

"What is the world to them—
Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all!—
Who in each other clasp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish?
Something than beauty dearer, should they look
Or on the mind, or mind-illumined face,—
Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love,—
The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven."

"All's well that ends well."

THE first anniversary of the deplorable events that occurred at Madrid, in July, 1834, was observed, with religious reverence, by a small circle of Spaniards lately arrived at Cambo, the western extremity of the Lower Pyrenees. The party consisted of our old acquaintance, Don Ruy de Valmarino, his daughter Merced, and

the worthy Pepe Manzanos. The day alluded to was one of sadness to the venerable hidalgo; it was the last day of that period of grief which custom prescribes for the sombre garb of mourning; but neither Merced nor her father could ever forget the deplorable events which it recorded, more particularly that calamity which had visited the metropolis of their native land, and had bereaved them of their nearest kindred;—both deeply affected, they devoted the day to prayer and fasting. On the following morning, however, a tacit understanding between them all consigned to silent regret the memory of the lamented and beloved, and a more cheerful appearance was assumed as each endeavoured to banish the outward semblance of sorrow; whilst Pepe Manzanos, with the vigour of mind which characterized him, notwithstanding his infirmities, effectually represented to his companions, that protracted and unavailing regrets for the decrees of Providence

become an irreverent accusation of the justice of the Divinity.

It was a fine morning, and from the neighbouring heights could be discovered the broad wave of the Biscay shore; the Adour winding on to the sea; the blue ridge of the Upper Pyrenees, together with the verdant and smiling hills of the adjacent scenery, adorned by luxuriant foliage. Wistfully would our friends turn an anxious look to the horizon of their native land, now wearing a more ominous aspect than ever.

The confines of France, laughing like her gay and lively sons, meet the gloomy frontiers of Iberia, which form a similar prototype of the character of the grave and solemn Spaniard. Along that ridge of mountains, which frequently constitutes the only division of one kingdom from the other, is occasionally seen a lonely crucifix, raised by the hand of man. But, despite that symbol of harmony and peace, there appears to be an everlasting barrier between the countries; and notwithstanding the party-cry

which, from interested motives, would level the boundary of these kingdoms, and establish for an axiom, "Point de Pyrenées!" one glance from the frontier-rocks will suffice, to enable us to comprehend that Nature herself is hostile to the union.

Yearning towards the land of their birth, often in anxious conjecture of the event of the internal strife of distracted Spain, our travellers would while away the hours in discussing news, with which, from their vicinity to the stage of action, they were constantly supplied; and the letters occasionally received from Jayme and Paquita ever came pregnant with fresh and exhilirating hopes for their favourite cause. "The King," Jayme would write, "is daily receiving reinforcements from the ranks of his opponents; whilst the Christinos, defeated in every rencontre by the intrepid Zumalacarregui, (whose star was in the ascendant,) were now supplicating for the aid of mercenaries in their behalf."

Merced's usual promenade was upon the road leading to Bayonne, and wound through a varied scene of wood, hill, and dale. One morning, accompanied, as usual, by her father, she had not proceeded far in the accustomed route before Don Ruy expressed a wish that they should vary their excursion.

"You cannot," archly observed the hidalgo, "expect another letter so soon, my child!"

Merced blushed, — her favourite walk had indeed for its object the probability of encountering the Bayonne letter-carrier, and thus acquiring, some few minutes earlier, possession of her lover's correspondence. But she had not openly confessed that such was the cause for her preference of the direction they were taking. Hastily assenting, however, to his proposal, as if to refute the implied insinuation, she turned back with her father in order to take a foot-path leading to the romantic site of the baths of Cambo. But the steady

progress of the post-office Mercury had just then brought him in sight of the "jolie Espagnole." With increased speed he overtook them, and presented Merced with a despatch.

"Another budget!" observed Don Ruy. "Faith, child, such close correspondence may subject us to the surveillance of the French police; and thus Herbert may actually involve you with Louis Philippe!"

"No treason, father, I trust!"

"Very suspicious, nevertheless. What can De Clifford possibly find to say? I am at a loss to conceive."

"Read, and judge, Sir," said Merced, instantly presenting him the letter with the seal unbroken,—for, on recognising the handwriting, she generally hesitated a moment in conjecture of what Herbert's letter might contain,—as if she wished to lengthen, by anticipation, the pleasure it was calculated to convey.

"No, daughter!—it was an idle question,"

said the hidalgo, pressing her hand, and gratified by her confidence—"you are the betrothed wife of Herbert de Clifford, and his authority will speedily supersede your father's. Yet, as the friend of your future husband, I shall be happy to learn that the affairs he quitted us upon are in prosperous train, and the result likely to be satisfactory to all parties. But you shall tell me as much or as little as you please."

Merced now opened the letter, and read—

"*Herbert de Clifford to Merced de Valmarino.*

"Affairs at length are settled. I leave England to-night, and perhaps shall be with you even before this letter.

"Events have come to pass which have realized every fond wish of my heart. Have I deserved so much happiness? One short twelvemonth past, Merced, I was an isolated being — now, Providence has bestowed upon me every blessing I can desire.

"You are acquainted with much of my story

—with circumstances which your delicacy, for my sake, will consign hereafter to oblivion.—The memory of one luckless victim,—my ill-starred mother,—may still be the honourable theme of our regrets—and I have inherited *her* name. The venerable authors of her being have bestowed her inheritance upon her child. Success favoured my researches:—the proofs and attestations which Alice Downie voluntarily placed in my power fully revealed the mystery of my birth,—and my lineaments, more faithfully than all, confirmed my identity. Time, which softens resentment, and soothes the deepest pang, had gradually restored my ill-fated mother's memory to the affection of her parents:—her death cancelled the sentence of her earthly judges—her sufferings in this world, let us hope, have atoned to the heavenly One. Of *him*, to whom I owe my being—my tongue shall never discourse but in prayer . . . . . .

"With a new name I have inherited an income ample for the enjoyment of life—together

with the consent of my venerable benefactors to claim my heart's election.

"Merced, my destiny is now in your hands—every hope, every joy" . . . . . .

The tramp of a horse's hoofs, which had now approached the unconscious hidalgo and his lovely daughter, was not heard in the deep sand on which they stood; and at that moment the horseman, who had dismounted, stood before them.

"Shall *I*, Merced, relieve you of the task, and read the conclusion?"

Recognition, surprise, embarrassment, pleasure—all had their momentary sway, whilst the face of Merced, ever the faithful mirror of her ingenuous mind, blushed deeper and deeper with each succeeding emotion.

"I told thee, child, there *was* treason about us," said the old hidalgo; "and here stands the traitor, whom I now detain," added he, pressing both Herbert's hands within his own.

It was well for Merced that her father's volu-

bility did not allow her time to utter a word; for though she had a thousand things to say, she was not quite prepared even to begin. Meanwhile, she suffered her hand to remain in her lover's, who was thoroughly perplexed between his own anxious inquiries of his beloved, and the innumerable questions of the hidalgo. Having at length, with some difficulty and perseverance, seized an opportunity, he avowed that he had been travelling without intermission several days and nights, and Merced besought her father to spare further inquiries, and insisted on Herbert's taking refreshment and repose.

Need the sequel be told, or shall we enlighten the gentle reader on the happiness of our acquaintance? During the remainder of the sojourn of the little party at Cambo, many and varied were the excursions made by them in its romantic neighbourhood. The oft-beaten track of the Bayonne road was now comparatively deserted by Merced, since her correspondent had become the partner of her rambles, for the

more wild and secluded scenery of the rocks of Techasson. Often as they climbed the neighbouring heights, or threaded the *Pas de Roland*, where, of old, that adventurous and daring knight whose name it bears, hotly pursued by the enemy after his defeat at Roncesvalles, cleft with his mighty sword a free passage for himself and horse through the living rock,—they would leave the hidalgo, and his companion, Pepe Manzanos, spite of themselves, to stop to recover their breath; whilst the lovers snatching those solitary moments, Herbert would press his blushing Merced to his heart—too full to speak its joy. There was an even tone of mind in the lovely daughter of Don Ruy deValmarino which bespoke its depth. If she was now happy in the prospect of her approaching nuptials with De Clifford, it was not without calculation for the future; and, avaricious of her store of bliss, she imposed upon herself a judicious restraint which should enable her to mete it out for life.

She loved passionately, but guarded against the too open avowal and display of her excess of fondness; coy, yet yielding, she would still be *won*.

Her personal attractions well enhanced the beauty of her mind. Her native elegance appeared rather a consequence of her refinement than the natural portion of her countrywomen.

> " It was not beauty only there;
> The sylphid shape, the polish'd brow,
> The locks of gold, or raven hair
> Run wild upon a neck of snow.
> Away! it was no sensual beam
> That ravish'd your devoted soul!
> She woke a fervid, living theme
> For after-thought, when absence stole
> Between you, and the vacant sight
> Turn'd then upon the memory's gleam,
> Rich in its own reality.
> It was her soul-divulging eye
> Her spirit that revealed its light,
> And fix'd you in idolatry!"

Ere we take our leave, we must revert to Don Jayme and his devoted companion and wife. The latter, resident at the court of Don Carlos,

"wears a coronetted brow," the consequence of the bravery and gallant bearing of her husband, who, in a memorable action, was exalted, for his prowess on the field of battle, by his monarch. His further career will belong to the history of Don Carlos de Bourbon.

Encouraged by the brightening prospects of the King, Pepe Manzanos was shortly after induced to fix his residence under the roof of his daughter.

The ill-starred Imnaz, Conde de Nuñez,—follower of the opposing force,—a conscientious adherent to the cause of Isabel Segunda,—is again on the theatre of war, and hopelessly seeks, in the pursuit of the enemy, to escape the remembrance of one identified with his earliest hopes and fondest recollections. Vain the attempt!—that image

"Sinks for safety deeper in his heart."

The Marquis de Olivares, banished from Madrid on suspicion of having been concerned

in the conspiracy with Palafox, Van Halen, Calbo de Rozas, and others, has taken up his residence at Paris, where Doña Vicentita,—who thus fortunately escaped, in time, some revelations of implication with the nefarious projects of Montreil, brought to light at his death,—has exchanged political control for that of fashion; and counts among her adherents the leading exquisites of St. Germain.

. . . . . .

Indulgent Reader, farewell! If thus far you have borne with the desultory tale related in the foregoing pages, permit us now to take our respectful leave. Such good company we quit with reluctance. But are we singular in "loving to hear ourselves talk"? If, therefore, we have not already transgressed too largely upon your patience, we beg to conclude with a paragraph just placed in our hands, and calculated to set at rest the hearts of the tender and sympathizing.

POST SCRIPTUM.

Before going to press, we have to acquaint the reader, that, since the compilation of the above narrative, Herbert Campbell, Esq., (late De Clifford,) is now settled in his native country. A few select friends surround his hospitable board; and his charming lady, who forms the delight of the circle, is now in that interesting situation which, in the refined terms of this intellectual age, is denominated "*Domestic solicitude.*"

THE END.

T. C. Savill, Printer, 107, St. Martin's Lane.